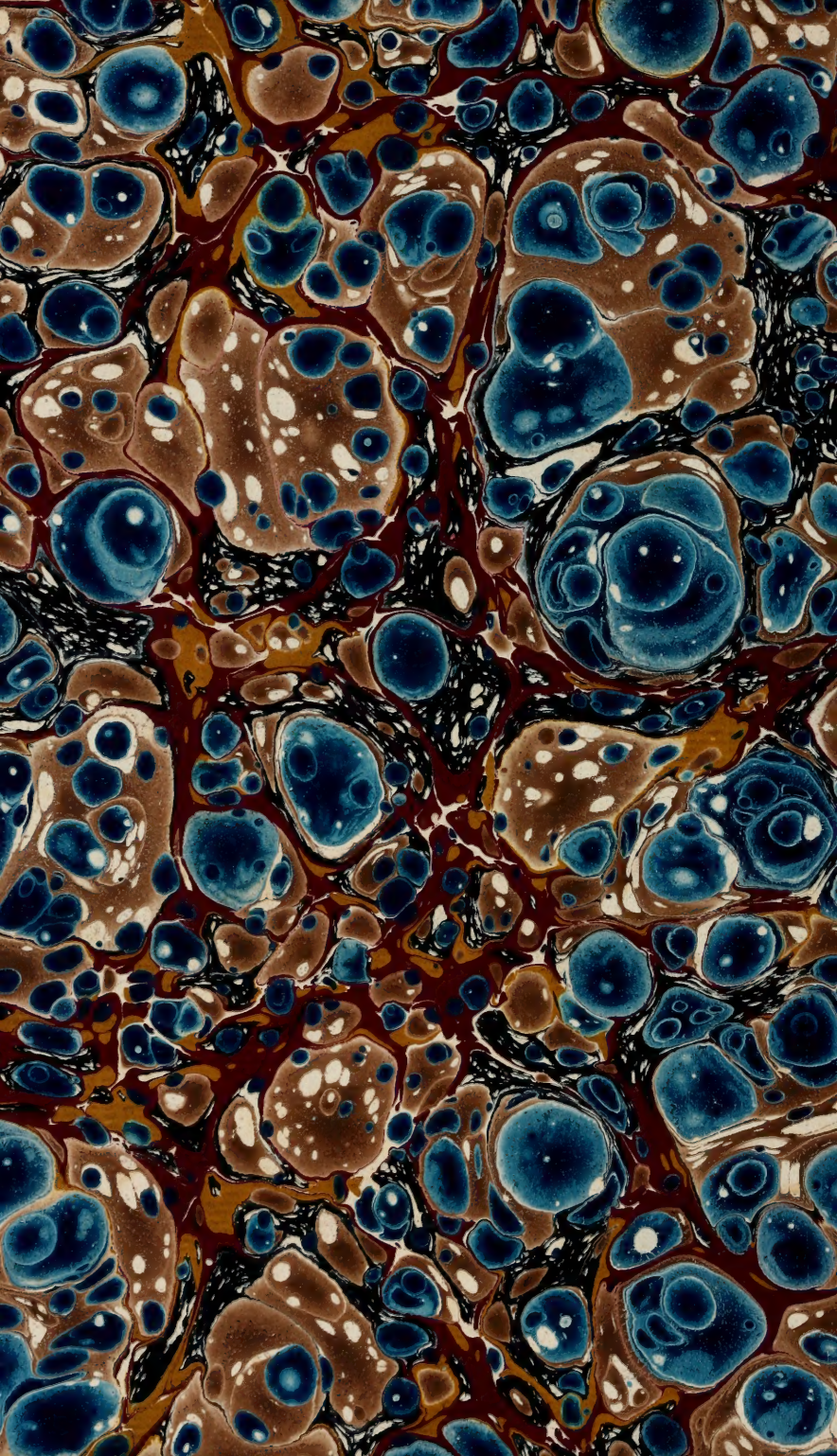
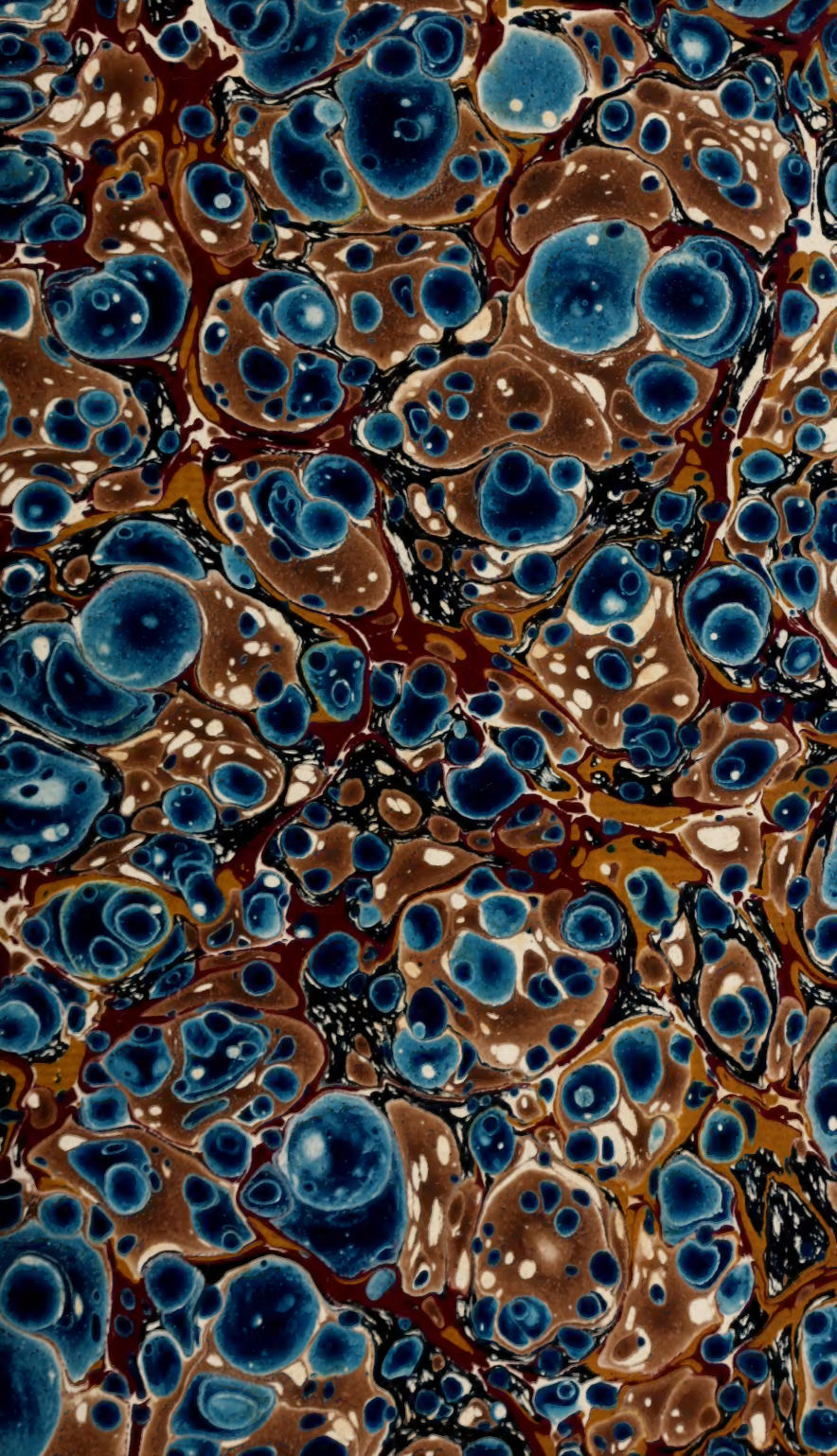
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HISTORY

OF

ENGLAND

FROM THE PEACE OF UTRECHT

TO THE PEACE OF VERSAILLES.

1713—1783.

BY LORD MAHON.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

VOL. VII.

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THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND

FROM

THE PEACE OF UTRECHT.

CHAPTER LXI.

CHAP. LXI. 1780.

The rising ferment in England, at the close of 1779 and commencement of 1780, was shown in numerous county meetings, all tending to Economical Reform. It was natural that, at such a period, the complaints of the people should take that course. There was a pang in contributing to taxes for the prosecution of the war, and receiving no news of triumph in return. There was a contrast, such as could not fail to strike the least observant minds, of the frequently recurring debts upon the Civil List with the personal frugality and unostentatious habits of the King. There was a clamour, and a just one surely, at the number of sinecure places bestowed on undeserving men, — at seeing suddenly enriched so many a son or nephew of some but second-rate Minister; each decked with some scarce intelligible title, as Clerk of the Pipe, or Clerk of the Pells, or one of the

CHAP. LXI. 1780.

Justices in Eyre; each enabled, under cover of this gibberish, to draw an ample salary.

Such feelings, which could not fail to arise in a long protracted and as yet inglorious war, were, of course, heightened and inflamed by all the skill of Opposition. In the first fortnight of December 1779, two motions for Economical Reform were brought forward in the House of Lords; the one by the Duke of Richmond, the second by the Earl of Shelburne. Both were rejected by large majorities. But on the same night as Lord Shelburne's Burke in the Commons gave notice, that after the Christmas holidays he would introduce a Bill on this important subject. At the same time he also stated the outline of his intended measure, and received warm encouragements from Fox and other of his friends. "I am "just come," said Fox, "from another place, "where the first men in this kingdom, the first "in abilities, the first in estimation, are now libel-"ling this House." Here, many a member may have, as Fox expected, shown surprise. "Yes, I "repeat it," cried Fox. "Every instance they "give — and they give many and strong instances "— of uncorrected abuse with regard to public "money is a libel on this House. . . . . Every "thing they state on the luxuriant growth of "corrupt influence — and it never was half so "flourishing — is a libel on this House." *

Richmond and Shelburne, though outvoted, were not foiled. The ill success of the Parliamentary

* Parl. Hist. vol. xx. p. 1302.

attacks, far from checking, rather incited and called forth, the popular demonstrations. Before the month of December had expired, an important meeting, which served as a pattern to the rest, was held in the chief town of our greatest county. From a single private room at York there went forth with no common strength the cry for Economical Reform. There stood Rockingham and Savile; there crowded in the independent freeholders, notwithstanding the many efforts that were made, by threat or by persuasion, to prevent them from attending. Such at least was the charge brought by the Marquis of Carmarthen, who was Lord Lieutenant of the East Riding at the time of the meeting, but who, concurring in its object, was in consequence dismissed from his Lord Lieutenancy.* In spite of every exertion to the contrary, upwards of 8,000 freeholders signed the county petition agreed upon at York, praying the House of Commons to reduce all exorbitant emoluments, and abolish all sinecure places. Another part of the York proceedings was to appoint a Committee of sixty-one gentlemen to carry on the necessary correspondence for promoting the prayer of the petition, and likewise to prepare the plan of a national association for the same object, and for

* Speech in the House of Lords, February 8. 1780. He stigmatises the means which had been used as "mean, shabby, "pitiful, and unwarrantable." That very day he had received the news of his dismissal, which no doubt may have given a keener edge to his epithets.

CHAP. LXI. 1780.

"such other measures as might conduce to restore "the freedom of Parliament."

The example of York was soon followed by other shires. Middlesex was the next to meet. And within a very few weeks, twenty-three more of our English counties, and eleven of our largest cities or towns had been convened. In all these there were adopted petitions similar to that of York; in most of them there were also named Committees of Correspondence. The latter being far too clearly framed from the precedents set by the revolted Colonies, were much disapproved by Lord Carmarthen and other moderate men, and were dropped accordingly in several of the counties. Nor, indeed, did the petitions for Economical Reform everywhere pass unanimously. Open resistance to their prayer was not likely to prevail. It was tried with very ill success at Huntingdon by the Earl of Sandwich. But protests, declaring that the whole should be left to the wisdom of Parliament, were signed by great part of the landed gentlemen in many places. — It is to be noted, that in all the steps tending to Economical Reform both branches of the old Opposition — the followers of Lord Rockingham and the followers of the late Lord Chatham — appear to have cordially concurred. Thus, while Lord Rockingham was busy in York, Lord Shelburne was no less busy in Buckinghamshire; and Chatham's son-in-law Lord Mahon became the Chairman of the Kent Committee. *

* For some of the ulterior proceedings see in the Appendix to

CHAP. LXI. 1780.

The great Yorkshire petition was presented to the Commons, on the 8th of February, by the principal Yorkshire member Sir George Savile. On that occasion, as the forms of the House did not yet prohibit, Savile delivered a speech in its support. His slender figure and his feeble voice (then especially he was suffering from hoarseness) seemed to expand, and his delicate frame to gather strength, from the magnitude of the interests confided to his charge; and his brother members, preserving an unbroken silence, showed him all the attention and respect due to a character so upright and unsullied. Three days later, Burke brought forward the motion that he had announced on Economical Reform. His speech, as shortly afterwards it was revised and published by himself, may deserve to rank among the highest of his oratorical productions. "One of the ablest speeches "I have ever heard," said Lord North in reply; "a speech such as no other member could have "made." Here the brilliant hues of fancy impart form and colour even to the dry bones of financial calculation. Here the very details of the Exchequer grow amusing. Thus lightly, for example, does Burke play on the defects of the five lesser sovereign jurisdictions of the realm: "Ours is not a mon- "archy in strictness; but as in the Saxon times "this country was an heptarchy so now it is a "strange sort of pentarchy. . . . Cross a brook,

this volume Lord Shelburne's letter to Lord Mahon, April 7. 1780.

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"and you lose the King of England; but you "have some comfort in coming again under His "Majesty, though shorn of his beams, and no more "than Prince of Wales. Go to the north, and you "find him dwindled to a Duke of Lancaster; turn "to the west of that north, and he pops upon you "in the humble character of Earl of Chester. "Travel a few miles on, the Earl of Chester dis- "appears, and the King surprises you again as "Count Palatine of Lancaster. If you travel "beyond Mount Edgecombe you find him once "more in his incognito, and he is Duke of Corn- "wall. So that, quite fatigued and satiated with "this dull variety, you are infinitely refreshed when "you return to the sphere of his proper splendour, "and behold your amiable Sovereign in his true, "simple, undisguised, native character of Majesty."

Burke proposed that these five lesser jurisdictions should be wholly swept away. "When the reason "of old establishments is gone" — thus with the truest Conservative wisdom he spoke on another branch of his subject — "it is absurd to keep "nothing but the burthen of them. This is super- "stitiously to embalm a carcase not worth an "ounce of the gums that are used to preserve it."

In the same spirit did Burke apply himself to the abuses in the great departments of the Royal Household. One attempt to correct them, he said, had indeed been made in the present reign. Lord Talbot, as High Steward, observing the lavish expense of the King's kitchen, had reduced several

tables, and put the persons entitled to them upon board wages. But subsequent duties requiring constant attendance, it was not found possible to prevent the King's servants being fed where they were employed. "And thus unluckily," said Burke, "this first step towards economy doubled "the expense!" CHAP. LXI. 1780.

It formed part of the orator's design, as he explained it, not merely to new model the Royal Household, and to clear it of its cumbrous offices, but to regulate the posts of Paymaster of the Forces and Treasurer of the Navy, to reduce the profits of the Auditors of the Exchequer, and to abolish altogether the Board of Trade, the Civil branch of the Ordnance, and the third Secretaryship of State. That Burke's ideas of reform were as yet too extensive, and not sufficiently matured, may be asserted on the authority of Burke himself; since, at a later period, when invested with the responsibilities of office, and allowed a longer time for reflection, he thought proper to recede from so large a portion of his scheme. Other parts, however, have been carried into execution with the happiest effect; and the high statesman-like ability with which Burke, in his speech, pleads for all the wise and temperate — wise, because temperate — principles on which he argues, is such as to claim the most careful perusal, and the most respectful mention, so long as the British Parliament or the British people may endure. Yet this was the man whom the superior genius of Lord

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John Cavendish, or of the Marquis of Rockingham, did not deem worthy to sit in Cabinet with them, and whom they consigned to a second place! How high an office in the state would Burke have been summoned to fill, had either birth or marriage made him even a third cousin of His Grace the Duke of Devonshire!

The eloquence of Burke on these mere economical details, enlivened, as we see it, by constant pleasantry, and enriched from abundant stores of reading, may deserve the higher admiration, if it be contrasted with the style of common financiers. Many such are found to value themselves mainly on their dryness and their dulness. Many such will occur to the recollection of every man who has sat in the House of Commons, even for a single Session, as fulfilling to the letter Goldsmith's masterly delineation of a self-styled man of business: — "We men of business," says his Mr. Lofty, "despise the moderns; and as for the an-"cients, we have no time to read them. Why, "now, here I stand, that know nothing of books. "I say, Madam, I know nothing of books; and "yet I believe, upon a land-carriage fishery, a "Stamp-Act, or an Indian Jaghire, I can talk my "two hours without feeling the want of them."*

Lord North, whatever might be his opinion as

* The "Goodnatured Man," act ii. There is also something most true to nature in Mr. Lofty's answer to the lady who had quoted to him Waller the poet. "Waller, Waller, is he of the "House?"

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to many points of Burke's proposal, knew the strength of the popular current by which it was borne onwards, and was too well-skilled in Parliamentary tactics to oppose it point-blank. On the contrary, he gave every facility for the introduction of Burke's first Bill (Burke had five in all), and it was presented with only one dissentient voice — that of Lord George Gordon. In Committee, however, a great variety of objections were started and of difficulties shown. Several of Burke's adherents began to feel that it was no such easy matter as they had thought, with due regard to vested interests, to new-model an old and complicated system. The House, by degrees, grew weary of the subject; and at length, towards the close of the Session, the Bill was demolished by a side-blow in Committee, Burke declaring, however, that he should not fail to bring forward the same measure in the course of the next year.

It is greatly to the honour of Burke's integrity and firmness, considering the vehement popular outcry at the time, that, while proposing to restrain and regulate the future Pension List, he forbore — and he gave his reasons for forbearing — to resume or curtail, or lay any tax upon, the pensions already granted. This defect (for so it might seem to heated partisans) was supplied by several auxiliary or rival motions. Colonel Barré thundered against the men of overgrown wealth still permitted to hold unreduced places of vast emolument, and rioting in the Army Extraordi-

CHAP. LXI. 1780.

naries. On another day, he said, he should propose a Commission of Accounts. But Lord North, dexterously coinciding in this proposal, drew the appointment of the Commission, greatly to Barré's indignation, into his own hands. Sir George Savile moved that the names at least of the holders of all pensions for life, or patent places, should be laid before the House. His motion was supported by Fox with his now customary eloquence and powers of both argument and ridicule, but was resisted by Lord North. "To expose," said the Minister, "the necessities of ancient and "noble families to the prying eye of malignant "curiosity—to hold up the man who has a pension "to the envy and detraction of him who hates him "because he has none — to prepare a feast for "party writers, and furnish materials for maga-"zines and newspapers which would magnify and "misrepresent every circumstance,— these are the "bad effects; but I know of no good ones that "could result from such indiscriminate exposure, "since the Civil List money was granted freely, "and without restriction or control, to the person "of the King."*

Able speeches to the same effect were delivered by two other members of the Government — by

* Debates in the Commons, February 15. and 21. 1780. From a subsequent discussion in the Lords (Parl. Hist., vol. xxi. p. 229.) we may gather that, as the Pension List then stood, the Scottish Peers, or their family connexions, were suspected to have obtained the lion's share of it.

the Lord-Advocate, Henry Dundas, and by Wedderburn, the Attorney-General. Their defence provoked from Colonel Barré (besides the lie direct which he gave to Wedderburn) a most unworthy sarcasm, quite in accordance, however, with the illiberal spirit of that time. Not one Englishman, he said, dares to stand forth in defence of the Minister: he has only two Scots! Lord North had moved an amendment, limiting the motions to all pensions "payable at the Ex-"chequer," so as to exempt those depending solely upon the Civil List; but even thus he prevailed in the division by a majority of only two votes.

Speaking on the same side, and on the same debates, Lord Nugent had exclaimed, "There are "many Lady Bridgets, Lady Marys, and Lady "Jennys who would be much hurt at having "their names entered in our proceedings as pen-"sioners of the State." In this lighter strain Lord Nugent scarcely did justice to his own opinions. When in 1838 the Pension List was thoroughly sifted by a Committee of the House of Commons, and the cause of every pension, with the circumstances of the holder, so far as they could be traced, were made public to the world, there were found undoubtedly some cases of ladies in which high birth combined with poverty had been held as sufficient recommendations to the Royal Bounty. But cases are far more numerous of ladies for whom a pittance had been worthily earned by the public service of a kinsman, and who were not

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always protected by that pittance from severe distress. No instance of the kind can be stronger than that of the Hon. General Carey, a descendant of the heroic Falkland, who in this very year 1780 was killed at the taking of St. Lucia from the French, leaving behind him an infant family of daughters. To each of these daughters a yearly pension of 80*l.* was granted by the King. Two of them survived till the Pension List inquiry of 1838, when the one, a lady then sixty-seven years of age, and belonging, as she says, to "that despised and degraded "class called pensioners," found it requisite to write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in vindication of their claims. She first points out how ill, even in a worldly sense, their pensions had atoned for a father's early care; how they had come forth as orphans without a friend or protector, and since had struggled on "in something nearly allied "to want.—I must not, however," she adds, "allow "this melancholy enumeration to make me forget "that which I must ever remember with gratitude, "namely, that this pension, which in these dear "times furnishes me with little more than daily "bread, and obliges me, to obtain that, to live in "banishment, was yet the means of procuring me "that religious and solid education adapted to my "fortunes, which has enabled me to bear up against "all the sorrows of them. I have, indeed, enjoyed "it long—perhaps the gentlemen of the Committee "will think too long—but that has been the will "of God, and not my fault; and it is true that, as

"it is my only resource, I should be glad to retain "it if I can be allowed so to do with honour and "without reproach, and to receive it with that "dignified thankfulness with which the daughter "of a usefully brave British officer may accept a "national testimony of her father's deserts; but "if this cannot be, and his services are considered "as having been long remunerated, why, then, Sir, "I can cheerfully resign that which I shall hope "may lessen the distress of some younger and "weaker child of affliction; and being, by God's "blessing, able, both in body and mind, to seek my "own subsistence in the education of the children "of some more fortunate family, I may, perhaps, "find an answer to the quarterly question of my "mind whether such wages as I should then re-"ceive for my honest service were not more "honourable than the degrading reception of a "pension so grudgingly bestowed." *

The personal tendency of many of the questions discussed in the Session of 1780 may be traced in the personal conflicts that they provoked. An altercation between Mr. Fox and another member of Parliament, Mr. William Adam, was followed by a duel, in which Mr. Fox was slightly wounded. Some months later, in the Lords, the Earl of Shelburne thought proper to complain that the command of one of the new-raised regiments had been

* This touching and beautiful letter is dated Vienna, January 11. 1838. It is printed at length in the proceedings of the Committee, p. 6. (Parl. Papers.)

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bestowed on a mere civilian member of Parliament, Mr. Fullarton; and that gentleman having formerly been attached to the British embassy at Paris, Lord Shelburne applied to him, in contempt, the French term COMMIS. Colonel Fullarton, with rather too much of the fire of his new profession, not only retaliated upon Lord Shelburne in the Lower House, but fought him in Hyde Park; on which occasion the noble Peer was shot, though not dangerously, in the body. With good reason might Sir James Lowther take up the subject that same evening in the Commons. If, he said, there are to be these constant appeals to arms, the Parliament of England will become no better than a Polish Diet. Yet certainly such meetings were not uncongenial to the temper of that time. We find the strongest arguments in their defence alleged on Dr. Johnson's high authority.* We find even Sir James Lowther, in reproving them, careful to explain that he did so only when they trenched on freedom of debate. He had himself, he said, been more than once engaged in conflicts of that nature upon other grounds, and whenever he was called upon he trusted he should show himself ready. No disapprobation of the duel as such was ex-

* Life by Boswell, under the dates of April 10. 1772, and April 19. 1773. Foote, at the same period, writing with the exaggeration which we might expect from him, makes his Major of Militia, when aggrieved, exclaim, "I will get our "chaplain to pen me a challenge!" (The Mayor of Garratt, act ii.)

pressed by the Corresponding Committees, though some of them were eager to insinuate that Lord Shelburne, from his zeal in their behalf, had been singled out for vengeance by the retainers of the Government.

Another altercation of that period might have led no less to conflict but for the graver and more nearly judicial character of one of the parties concerned. There had been for some time a growing alienation between the Court and the Speaker of the House of Commons Sir Fletcher Norton; but when the rumour rose, that applications had been made to the Chief Justice (De Grey) to retire, so that the Attorney-General might be seated in his place, Norton could no longer restrain himself. He took occasion, when the House was in Committee on Burke's Bill for Economical Reform, to complain that this very post of Chief Justice had been held out to him by the Duke of Grafton as an inducement to accept meanwhile the Speaker's chair. It was enough for Lord North to answer coldly, that he was not bound by a promise of his predecessor. He likewise disclaimed all knowledge of any such negotiation with the Chief Justice as the Speaker had supposed. But Wedderburn, stung at Sir Fletcher's mention of his name, poured upon him, in reply, with most powerful effect, a torrent of wit and invective. He reminded the House, that the Speaker had not disdained to accept, in requital, nay, in anticipation, of his services, one of the richest of the sinecures—

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a Chief Justiceship in Eyre. He added, and surely with much force and truth, "When the Right "Honourable gentleman quitted Westminster Hall "to slide first into the enjoyment of a great sine-"cure, and afterwards to be exalted to the high "situation he still holds, he left behind him many "who continued to labour with industry and "assiduity in hopes that the line of preferment "would be open to them. It is rather hard, "therefore, that the Right Honourable gentleman "should throw his mantle over those whom he has "left to toil behind him, and secure to himself an "exclusive claim to return to the profession, not "for the purpose of joining in the toil of it, but "merely to enjoy those posts of dignity and honour "which other men in the daily routine of business "had laboured to merit, and expected in their "turn to receive." *

The cry for Economical Reform, which had taken its rise in the distresses of the country, drifted more and more, as impelled by party spirit towards distrust of the Crown. See, it was exclaimed, both in and out of Parliament, how vast the influence, how irresponsible the power, which that army of inferior placemen can command! Mr. John Crewe, member for Cheshire, brought in a Bill which had once been Mr. Dowdeswell's, to disable revenue-

* See the Parl. Hist., vol. xxi. p. 274. and Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 136; the last containing an account of Wedderburn's speech as derived from the first Lord Melville.

officers from voting at elections; he was supported both by Fox and Conway; but on the motion that "the Bill be now committed," he found himself in a minority. Sir Philip Jennings Clerke renewed his motion of a former year, to exclude contractors from the House of Commons, unless their contracts were obtained by a public bidding. His Bill passed the Commons almost unanimously; but in the Upper House, the active exertions and the able speeches of Lord Chief Justice Mansfield and Lord Chancellor Thurlow procured its rejection. Activity likewise, though not ability, might on that occasion be justly ascribed to Lord Hillsborough. Certain it is that, at no other period of our annals, did the abuses of the contract system flourish in such rank luxuriance. At no other period were they so highly detrimental to the public service. Thus, to give only one slight instance, Colonel Simcoe, a most active officer in our later American campaigns, speaking of this very year, 1780, complains of the "miserable contract hats which had been sent "from England." * Even now, after so much has been achieved by way both of safeguard and reform, we may sometimes still feel the truth of that caustic remark made by Pepys two centuries ago: — "I see it is impossible for the King to have things "done as cheap as other men!" †

It was on the 6th of April that the rising jealousy of the executive power was, both in and out

* Journal of the Queen's Rangers, by Colonel Simcoe, p. 92.

† Pepys's Diary, July 21. 1662.

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of Parliament, most conspicuously shown. There was held that afternoon a meeting of the people of Westminster, where Fox appeared and delivered an harangue, supported by his two friends, the Dukes of Portland and of Devonshire. At the request of the Middlesex magistrates, and from the apprehensions of some popular disturbance, a body of troops had been drawn out and kept ready in the neighbourhood of Westminster Hall. How far from ill-founded were those apprehensions was abundantly proved by the events in London, only a few weeks afterwards. But meanwhile the timidity, as it was termed, of the Middlesex magistrates exposed them to most vehement invectives from the Opposition chiefs. Burke, in the House of Commons, called them "reptiles," — the mere "scum of the earth." "If," cried Fox, "a set of "men are to be let loose on the Constitutional "meetings of the people, then all who go to such "meetings must go armed!"

Within the House the business of the day was begun by the presentations of further petitions in favour of Economical Reform — petitions so many and so large, that, according to the strong expression of a contemporary writer, they seemed, not so much to cover, as to bury the table.* Then, with the House in Committee, Dunning rose. Clearly, boldly, and with the utmost bitterness of language, he reviewed the conduct of the Ministers with regard to Burke's great measure of re-

* Annual Register, 1780, p. 165.

form: at first, he said, that they had received it with a show of candour, and a kind of mock approbation, but had afterwards declared themselves fundamentally opposed to every one of its leading objects. Other measures of that Session, tending to the same end, had been in like manner either defeated or eluded. What, then, remains, said Dunning, but for the House to bind itself, and satisfy the public by putting forth a clear simple proposition, and voting the words which he concluded with moving: — "That it is the opinion of this Committee, that "the influence of the Crown has increased, is in- "creasing, and ought to be diminished."

Sir Fletcher Norton, full of spleen against Lord North, eagerly availed himself of the Speaker's privilege of speaking in Committee, and strongly supported Mr. Dunning's Resolution. So far did his rancour overpower his judgment, that we find him insist on a point most unseemly for a Speaker to urge — that if Honourable Members should now vote the petitions of the people unfounded, he wished them much joy of going down to their constituents with that opinion. Lord North, in reply, spoke with his usual talent, though scarcely with his usual temper. He reminded the House, as he might with perfect truth, that he had never insinuated that his abilities were equal to his post, and had constantly declared himself ready to resign it; but still, he said, he had maintained himself, in spite of the exertions of those who had formerly contended against the rights of the people, and

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who were now pursuing measures likely to overturn the Constitution.

In the course of this arduous debate, a diversion in favour of the Government was attempted by one of its ablest members — the Lord Advocate. First, he moved that the Chairman should leave the Chair. But that motion, being understood as stifling the inquiry, was ill-received, and, by permission of the House, withdrawn. Next, he proposed to add, as an amendment to the original motion, the opening words, "it is now necessary "to declare." Fox, as the Opposition leader, declared his acquiescence in the suggestion, and the motion of Dunning was put to the House in that amended form. Still, however, the Lord Advocate retained the liberty of voting, and he did vote, against the whole motion; while he had succeeded in his object, namely, to convert, as far as possible, a general averment into a temporary declaration which might, at some future period, be retracted or disowned.

Mr. Dunning and his friends had certainly some considerable instances to allege in support of their position. But they wholly overlooked the fact that if, on the one side, the influence of the Crown had been augmenting, there was, on the other, at least an equal relaxation of its prerogative. It is laid down as beyond all dispute, by a most judicious and impartial historian of our own time, that ever since the Revolution, there has been a syste-

matic diminution of the reigning prince's control.* In all probability, however, such considerations decided but few votes. Many more were swayed by the argument at which the Speaker had so unscrupulously glanced, that the Parliament was now near closing the sixth year of its existence, and must, at no distant period, be dissolved. Under these impressions, the Resolution of Dunning was carried against the Government by a majority of eighteen, the numbers being 233 and 215. It is worthy of note that, of all the English county members, no more than nine appear in the lists of the minority.

His first Resolution being thus carried, Dunning forthwith proceeded to move a second, purporting that the House had the full right to correct any abuses in the Civil List Revenue. A third Resolution was added by Thomas Pitt, to the effect that it was their duty to redress, without delay, the grievances complained of in the petitions of the people. These latter declarations being likewise affirmed in spite of the efforts of Lord North, Fox, at past one o' clock in the morning, moved that all three should be immediately reported to the House. With good reason might Lord North protest against that course, as "violent, arbitrary, "and unusual;" but Fox persisting as though desirous to leave the House no leisure for reflection, and the Government not venturing to try

* Hallam's Constit. Hist., vol. iii. p. 395.

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a second division, the Report was brought up and the House adjourned.

Exulting in his victory, Dunning was eager to pursue it. When next the Committee met, he brought forward other motions more in detail, respecting the Civil List and the right of certain members of the Household to sit in Parliament. On the division, however, he saw his numbers decrease; and they were still further lessened after an adjournment of ten days, which the Speaker's illness rendered necessary. The old supporters of Lord North, who had voted against him on the 6th of April, began to think that they had done enough for their own popularity at the General Election. They now paid less regard to their constituents and more to their convictions; and thus the current of their votes returned to its accustomed channel. When Dunning moved an Address, requesting the King not to dissolve the Parliament, nor prorogue the Session until proper measures had been taken to diminish the influence of the Crown, he found himself defeated in a full House by a majority of 51; another motion by Serjeant Adair, for withholding the Supplies until after the redress of grievances, was negatived without debate; and finally, on the 26th of May, when the House was again in Committee on Petitions, a technical motion that the Chairman should leave the Chair was carried against Dunning by a majority of 43. Thus, the important Resolutions of the 6th of April remained, as it were, alone upon the

Journals; all their expected consequences, all the steps requisite to give them force and validity, having been rejected by the House. Deep was the disappointment and loud the clamour of the Opposition chiefs. Even their vocabulary of invective, though most ample and well tried, scarcely sufficed to their zeal. "It is shameful, it is base, "it is unmanly, it is treacherous," cried Fox. On the other hand, Lord North who had never lost his good humour since his defeat, showed himself no less composed and equable at his return of fortune.

But within a few days of the close of these transactions, they were quite forgotten in a train —new and wholly unlooked for—of affairs. Then of a sudden, like a meteor rising from the foulest marshes, appeared those fearful riots, to which the most rank intolerance gave origin, and Lord George Gordon a name. Then the midnight sky of London was reddened with incendiary fires, and her streets resounded to the cry of an infuriated mob; then our best and wisest statesmen had to tremble, not only for their lives, but for their hearths and homes; then for once in our annals, the powers of Government and order seemed to quail and succumb before the populace of the capital in arms.

In a former chapter it has been already shown how the Protestant Associations, spreading from Scotland to England, and selecting Lord George Gordon as their common chief, continued through

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the year 1779, to gather strength and numbers.* The conduct of Lord George showed that he was well entitled to his post of pre-eminence in folly. During the session of 1780, he made many speeches in the House of Commons, always marked by ignorant fanaticism, and often by low buffoonery. Thus, on one occasion, we find him call Lord Nugent "the old rat of the Constitution."† Here his meaning seems not quite clear, nor is it of the least importance to discover; but it may serve for a sample of his style. Early in the year, he had obtained an audience of the King, and read out to His Majesty page after page of an Irish pamphlet, so long as the daylight lasted.‡ He suspected, or at least he was wont to insinuate, that George the Third was a Roman Catholic at heart. His next object was to obtain popular petitions, complaining of the recent relaxation in the Penal Laws.

It had been hoped, in the course of the last year, that some indulgence to the Protestant Dissenters might be the best means to lessen or divert their rancour against the Roman Catholics, and to convince them that no exclusive favour was intended to these last. With such views nearly the same measure of Relief from Subscription, which the Lords had rejected by a large majority in 1772, and again in 1773, passed their House in 1779, when transmitted from the Commons, and, it is said, without debate.§ The indulgence was

* See vol. vi. pp. 363 and 396.

† Parl. Hist. vol. xxi. p. 407.

‡ H. Walpole to Lady Ossory, January 29. 1780.

§ Parl. Hist. vol. xx. p. 322. See also in the Appendix to

accepted, but the rancour was not removed. This plainly appeared from the great popular support with which even the wildest projects of Lord George Gordon were received. The petition which he wished to obtain from London was at this time the object of his especial care. It was invited and urged on in every manner by public advertisements and by personal entreaties. It was for several weeks in circulation, and received many thousand signatures. To give it greater force and effect Lord George, towards the close of May, convened a meeting of the Protestant Association in Coachmakers' Hall. There, after a long speech, and in a most crowded room, he gave notice that he would present the petition to the House of Commons, on the 2nd of June. Resolutions were passed that the whole body of the Association and their friends would, on that day, assemble in St. George's Fields, with blue cockades in their hats, to distinguish all true Protestants from their foes. Still further to incite them Lord George added, that if the assemblage did not amount to 20,000, he would not deliver the petition.

Accordingly on Friday, the 2nd of June, and at ten o'clock in the morning, St. George's Fields were thronged with blue cockades. They were computed at 50,000 or 60,000, and by some persons even at 100,000 men.* The love of frolic and of

my fifth volume, a letter from Dr. Price to Lord Chatham, dated March 11. 1773.

* London Courant, June 3. 1780. This newspaper thinks fit to add, "It was a glorious and most-affecting spectacle to

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staring had certainly brought many new accessions to their ranks. Appearing in the midst and welcomed by their enthusiastic cheers, Lord George Gordon, in the first place indulged them with another of his silly speeches. Next, they were marshalled in separate bands, the main body marching over London Bridge and through Temple Bar to the Houses of Parliament. In this procession they walked six abreast, and in their van was carried their great petition, containing, it was said, no less than 120,000 signatures or marks.

London, at that period, was far from yet possessing the sturdy and disciplined police which now, on any chance of riot, or even of mere crowd and pressure, lines our streets and squares. There were only the parish beadles, and the so-called watchmen of the night, for the most part feeble old men, frequently knocked down by the revellers, and scoffed at by the play-wrights, of the age. In the face of that mighty array so long previously announced, which Lord George Gordon was leading to Whitehall, not one measure of precaution had been taken by the Government. They had neither sworn in any special constables nor stationed any soldiers. It must be owned, however, that the reproaches on that score came with no good grace from the lips of the Opposition chiefs,

"see such numbers of our fellow-citizens advancing in the "cause of Protestantism, which our Protestant Bishops have so "meanly and infamously deserted." But by the next publication (Monday, June 5.) the Editor's tone had wholly changed. "What melancholy forebodings must not the outrage and "insult," &c. &c.

which had so lately poured forth their loudest clamours when, in the apprehension of some tumult at the Westminster meeting, a body of troops had been kept ready.

Finding no obstruction to their progress, the blue cockades advanced to Palace Yard, and took possession of the open space some time before the two Houses met, as they did later in the afternoon. Then, with only a few door-keepers and messengers between them and some of the principal objects of their fury, they were not long in learning the dangerous secret of their strength. The Lords had been summoned for that day, to hear a motion from the Duke of Richmond, in favour of annual Parliaments and unrestricted suffrage. Lord Chancellor Thurlow was ill and at Tunbridge, and the Earl of Mansfield had undertaken to preside in his place. But as it chanced Lord Mansfield was then most unpopular with the Protestant Associators, having not long since charged a jury to acquit a Roman Catholic priest, who was brought before him charged with the crime of celebrating Mass. Thus, no sooner did his carriage appear than it was assailed and its windows broken, while the venerable judge, the object of the fiercest execrations as "a notorious Papist," made his way into the House with great difficulty, and on entering, could not conceal his torn robe and his dishevelled wig. He took his seat upon the woolsack pale and quivering.*

* "Quivering on the woolsack like an aspen" was the de-

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The Archbishop of York's lawn sleeves were torn off and flung in his face. The Bishop of Lincoln, disliked as a brother of Lord Thurlow, fared still worse; his carriage was demolished, while the prelate, half fainting, sought refuge in an adjacent house, from which, on recovering himself, he made his escape in another dress (some said in a woman's) along the leads. Lord Hillsborough and Lord Townshend, who came together, and the other Secretary of State, Lord Stormont, were roughly handled, and could scarcely make their way through the people. From Lord President Bathurst they pulled his wig, telling him, in contumelious terms, that he was "the Pope," and also "an old woman;" thus, says Horace Walpole, splitting into two their notion of Pope Joan! The Duke of Northumberland, having with him in his coach a gentleman in black, a cry arose among the multitude that the person thus attired must be a Jesuit and the Duke's confessor; a conclusion, it may fairly be owned, not at all more unreasonable than many others they had formed. On the strength of this, their discriminating judgment,

scription by the Duke of Gloucester that same night, to Horace Walpole (Letter to Lady Ossory, June 3. 1780). On the other hand, Lord Campbell is perhaps a little too eager to praise his brother Chief Justice for "calm dignity," (Lives, &c., vol. ii. p. 518), and to add, three pages further, "I observe, with great "pride, that on this occasion the Law Lord showed much more "courage than any other member of the House, spiritual or "temporal."

His Grace was forced from his carriage, and robbed of his watch and purse. CHAP. LXI. 1780.

Still, however, as the Peers by degrees came in, the business of the House in regular course proceeded. Prayers were read, some formal Bills were advanced a stage, and the Duke of Richmond then began to state his reasons for thinking that, under present circumstances, political powers might safely be entrusted to the lowest orders of the people. His Grace was still speaking, when Lord Montfort burst into the House, and broke through his harangue. Lord Montfort said that he felt bound to acquaint their Lordships of the perilous situation in which, at that very moment, stood one of their own members; he meant Lord Boston, whom the mob had dragged out of his coach, and were cruelly maltreating. "At this instant," says an eye-witness, "it is hardly possible to conceive "a more grotesque appearance than the House "exhibited. Some of their Lordships with their "hair about their shoulders; others smutted with "dirt; most of them as pale as the ghost in Ham-"let; and all of them standing up in their several "places, and speaking at the same instant. One "Lord proposing to send for the Guards, another "for the Justices or Civil Magistrates, many "crying out, Adjourn! Adjourn! while the skies "resounded with the huzzas, shoutings, or hoot-"ings and hissings in Palace Yard. This scene "of unprecedented alarm continued for about half "an hour."*

* Reprinted in the Parl. Hist. vol. xxi. p. 669. In the

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It was proposed by Lord Townshend, that the Peers should go forth as a body, and attempt the rescue of Lord Boston. This proposal was still debating, rather too slowly for its object, when Lord Boston himself came in, with his hair dishevelled and his clothes covered with hair-powder. He had been exposed to especial danger, through a wholly unfounded suggestion from some persons in the crowd, that he was a Roman Catholic; upon which the multitude, with loud imprecations, had threatened to cut the sign of the Cross upon his forehead. But he had the skill to engage some of the ring-leaders in a controversy on the question whether the Pope be Antichrist; and while they were eagerly discussing that favourite point, he contrived to slip through them. After such alarms, however, the Peers did not resume the original debate. They summoned to the Bar two of the Middlesex Magistrates, who declared that they had received no orders from the Government, and that, with all their exertions since the beginning of the tumult, they had only been able to collect six constables. Finally, at eight o'clock, the House adjourned till the morrow; and the Peers, favoured by the dusk, returned home on foot, or in hackney carriages, with no further insult or obstruction.

The members of the Commons, as less conspicuous in their equipages than the Peers, were not so much molested in passing to their House. But

Lords' Journals of that day appears the unusual entry: "Notice "was taken of a tumultuous assembly," &c.

when once assembled, their danger was far greater, since the infuriated multitude, finding no resistance, burst into, and kept possession of the lobby. Here they raised loud shouts of "No Popery! "No Popery!" and "Repeal! Repeal!"* Meanwhile, Lord George Gordon, seconded by Alderman Bull, was presenting their great Protestant petition, and moving that the House should consider it in Committee forthwith. On the other side, it was proposed that this Committee should be deferred until Tuesday, the 6th. When, however, upon this point a division was demanded, it was found impracticable. Neither the Ayes nor the Noes could go forth, thronged as was the lobby with strangers, and unable, as the Sergeant-at-Arms declared himself, to clear it. During the debates, Lord George endeavoured to keep up the spirit of his friends, by showing himself at the top of the gallery-stairs, and making several harangues to the noisy concourse in the lobby. He exhorted them by all means to persevere; and told them, from time to time, the names of the members who were speaking against them. "There is Mr. Burke," he said, "the member for Bristol;" and, soon afterwards, "Do you know that Lord North calls "you a mob?" Thus, their fury increasing, the House, at intervals, resounded with their cries of "No Popery!" and their violent knocks at the door. General Conway and Lord Frederick

* Evidence of Joseph Pearson, the door-keeper. (State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 529.)

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Campbell, that same evening at supper, said there was a moment when they thought they must have opened the doors, and fought their way out sword in hand.

Lord North, however, at this crisis showed great firmness, animating the resolution of the House by his unperturbed demeanour, but sending privately, and in all haste, for a party of the Guards. Other members made it a personal matter with Lord George. Colonel Holroyd told him that he had hitherto ascribed his conduct to insanity; but now saw that there was more of malice than of madness in it; and that, if he again attempted to address the rioters, he, Colonel Holroyd, would immediately move for his commitment to Newgate. Colonel Murray, one of Lord George's kinsmen, used still bolder language: — "My Lord "George, do you really mean to bring your rascally adherents into the House of Commons? "If you do, the first man of them that enters I "will plunge my sword, not into his body, but "into yours!" Lord George appears to have been daunted. Certainly, at least, he was silenced. Indeed, in one part of the evening, he quietly went up to the eating-room, where he threw himself into a chair and fell asleep, or nearly so, while listening to some excellent admonitions from Mr. Bowen, the Chaplain of the House.*

Failing the incitements of Lord George, the

* Evidence, at his trial, of the Rev. Thomas Bowen. (State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 525.)

crowd within the lobby grew less fierce. Out of doors, moreover, great exertions were making to allay the storm. Lord Mahon, who was known to many of the people as a recent candidate for Westminster, harangued them from the balcony of a coffee-house, and is said to have done good service to the cause of law and order.* In this manner time was gained, until towards nine o'clock, when an active Middlesex Justice, Mr. Addington, appeared with a party of Horse Guards. Mr. Addington told the people in the streets, that he meant them no harm, and that the soldiers should retire if they would quietly disperse, which many hundreds of them did accordingly, first giving the Magistrate three cheers. A party of the Foot Guards was also drawn up in the Court of Requests, and the lobby was now cleared; thus, at length, enabling the House of Commons to divide. Only eight members were found willing to support Lord George in his ignominious proposal for immediate deliberation, at the bidding and in the presence of the mob. Against that proposal 194 votes, including tellers, were recorded; and the House was then adjourned until the Tuesday following.

* "Lord Mahon counteracted the incendiary, and chiefly "contributed by his harangues to conjure down the tempest." (H. Walpole to Mason, June 4. 1780. See also his Letters to Lady Ossory, vol. ii. p. 415. ed. 1848.) One of Lord Mahon's qualifications for addressing a large crowd with effect is satirically glanced at in the *Rolliad*:

"Mahon outroaring torrents in their force,
"Bankes the precise, and fluent Wilberforce!"

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With the adjournment of both Houses, and the dispersion of the crowd in Palace-Yard, it was imagined that the difficulties of the day had closed. The magistrates returned home, and sent away the soldiers. Unhappily, several parties of the rioters were intent on further mischief. Repairing to the two Roman Catholic chapels of the Sardinian and Bavarian Ministers in Lincoln's Inn Fields and in Warwick Street — chapels which existed by the faith of treaties, and were not at all connected with the Acts of 1778 — they set them in flames. Engines were sent for, but the mob prevented them from playing; while the benches from the Sardinian chapel, being flung into the street, afforded the materials for a bonfire, as a token of the public exultation. At length the soldiers came — too late to prevent the havoc, in time only to seize and to secure thirteen of the rioters.

Next morning the town was, to all appearance, perfectly tranquil. The House of Lords met in the forenoon, and on the motion of Earl Bathurst, agreed to an Address for prosecuting the authors and abettors of the recent outrages. The angry taunts that followed between the Government and Opposition members, may be readily conceived and need not be detailed. But it is well worthy of note, with how much of political foresight and sagacity Lord Shelburne suggested the idea of a new police. "Let their Lordships," he said, "at "least those who are in administration, recollect

"what the police of France is; let them examine "its good, and not be blind to its evil. They "would find its construction excellent; its use "and direction abominable. Let them embrace "the one, and shun the other."

Notwithstanding the general and confident belief that the disturbances were over, they recommenced, in a slight degree, that very evening in Moorfields. On the next afternoon, that is, on Sunday the 4th, they became far more serious in the same quarter. Unhappily Kennett, the Lord Mayor, was, as Wilkes afterwards complained, a man wholly wanting in energy and firmness. The first outrages within his jurisdiction being unchecked and almost unnoticed, tended to give rise to many more. Again assembling in large bodies, the mob attacked both the chapels and the dwelling-houses of the Roman Catholics in and about Moorfields. The houses they stripped of the furniture, and the chapels of the altars, pulpits, pews, and benches, all which served to make bonfires in the streets.

On the ensuing afternoon, that is, on Monday the 5th of June, a Drawing Room had been appointed at St. James's, in celebration of the King's Birthday. Previous to the Drawing Room a Privy Council was held, at which the riots were discussed. But as yet they were deemed of so slight importance that no one measure was taken with regard to them, beyond a Proclamation offering a reward of 500*l.* for a discovery of the persons concerned in setting fire to the Sardinian and

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Bavarian chapels. Even Lord Mansfield, who had not only seen, but felt, the fury of the mob, fell into the same error of underrating it. When in the course of this day, Mr. Strahan, the printer, who had also been insulted, called upon his Lordship to express his fears from the licentiousness of the populace, the Chief Justice, we are told, treated it as a very slight irregularity.*

That delusion, however, was dispelled by the events of the same day. The blue cockades growing bolder and bolder by indulgence, mustered in high spirits and with increasing numbers. While some parties proceeded to destroy the Romanist chapels in Wapping and East Smithfield, others broke open and plundered the shops and houses of Mr. Rainsforth and Mr. Maberly, two tradesmen who had given evidence against the rioters secured on the Friday night. But the principal object of attack was the house of Sir George Savile, obnoxious as the author of the first relaxation in the Penal Code. Savile House, which stood in Leicester Fields, was accordingly carried, as it were, by storm, and given up to pillage. Some of the furniture derived from the chapels or the private dwellings, was, previously to its being burned in the adjacent fields, dragged in triumph and displayed through Welbeck Street, before the house of Lord George Gordon. That foolish young fanatic now began to shrink from the

* Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, June 9. 1780. The passages from these letters, relating to the riots, are inserted in Boswell's Life.

results of his own rashness. In the name of his Protestant Association he put forth a hand-bill, disavowing all share in the riots; but he soon found how far easier it is to raise than to allay the storm.

By this time the alarm had spread far and wide. Burke, who had most zealously supported Savile in the good work of religious toleration, found it requisite, with his family, to take refuge beneath the roof of his friend General Burgoyne. Throughout these troubles, and amidst all the anxious scenes of the next day, his demeanour was courageous and composed, and his wife showed herself not unworthy such a husband. "Jane," thus writes their brother Mr. Richard Burke, "Jane has the firm-"ness and sweetness of an angel; but why do I "say an angel?—of a woman!" *

On Tuesday the 6th, according to adjournment both Houses met. A detachment of Foot Guards had been ranged in Westminster Hall, and in great measure overawed the mob; nevertheless, one of the Ministers, Lord Stormont, was slightly wounded, and his carriage altogether demolished. The Peers, after a short discussion, adjourned. In the Commons, notwithstanding the alarms of personal violence, there mustered about 200 members. Lord George Gordon was there as before, decked with a blue cockade. Upon this an independent member of high spirit, Colonel Herbert, soon afterwards raised to the peerage as Lord Porchester, declared that he could not sit and vote in that

* See Burke's Correspondence, vol. ii. p. 351.

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House whilst he saw a Noble Lord in it with the ensign of riot in his hat; and he threatened that, if his Lordship would not take it out, he would walk across the House and do it for him. Lord George with rather tame submission, or only yielding, as he said, to the entreaties of his friends, put the obnoxious symbol in his pocket. Neither Savile, nor yet Burke, was absent from his place. Burke, on his way down, had been surrounded by the mob, and was for some time in their hands. He did not conceal his name, nor yet dissemble his sentiments, but remonstrated with them, and they, honouring his firmness, let him go. "I even "found," he says, "friends and well-wishers among "the blue cockades." Of his subsequent speech that day in Parliament, he adds: "I do not think "I have ever, on any occasion, seemed to affect "the House more forcibly. However, such was "the confusion that they could not be kept from "coming to a Resolution, which I thought unbe- "coming and pusillanimous; which was, that we "should take that flagitious petition which came "from that base gang called the Protestant Asso- "ciation, into our serious consideration. I am now "glad that we did so; for if we had refused it, the "subsequent ravages would have been charged "upon our obstinacy." * The Resolution to which Burke thus objects, had been moved by General Conway. It went no further than to pledge the House to consider the petitions "as soon as the

* Letter to R. Shackleton, June 13. 1780. (Corresp. vol. ii. p. 354.)

"tumults subside, which are now subsisting." With this promise the Commons adjourned. CHAP. LXI. 1780.

While the Houses were still sitting, a portion of the mob attacked the official residence of Lord North in Downing Street. It was saved by the timely appearance of a party of soldiers. But during that afternoon, and the whole of Wednesday the 7th, the outrages rose to a far higher pitch than they had yet attained. It might be said, with but slight exaggeration, that for two days the rabble held dominion in the town. It might be said in the eloquent words of Gibbon, an eye-witness to these proceedings, that "forty thousand Puritans, such "as they might be in the time of Cromwell, have "started out of their graves." * In truth, however, within these two days the character of the mob was greatly changed. Many of the heated, but honest, zealots of the Protestant Association had withdrawn. Their places had been filled, and more than filled, by fiercer spirits; by men who thirsted for plunder, and by men who aimed at revolution. In many cases they now bore, not only blue cockades in their hats, but also oaken cudgels in their hands. Flinging aside all future reliance on their silly tool Lord George, they were, it was clear, directed by secret, but daring, leaders of their own. Still, however, "No Popery" was their cry, and in the main their motive; it was the Reformed Faith that gave a plea for some of the worst crimes which it condemns!

* Letter to Mrs. Gibbon, at Bath, June 8. 1780. (Miscellaneous Works.)

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On the Tuesday afternoon, about six o' clock, a vast multitude appeared in front of Newgate, shouting aloud for the freedom of their brother rioters committed on the Friday night. Mr. Akerman, the keeper, firmly refused to betray his duty or deliver the prisoners; upon which his house was attacked and presently in flames. The wines and spirits in his cellar supplied, and not in vain, opportunity for most brutal drunkenness. Meanwhile, the yells of the mob without the prison, were answered by the wild cry of the felons from within; some of these in hope of liberty, others in dread of conflagration. So strong was the prison itself that it might have been defended, at least against the rabble, by a mere handful of resolute men; such men, however, were wholly wanting at that place and time. Sledge-hammers and pickaxes were plied with slight effect against the iron-studded doors; but they were set on fire by means of Mr. Akerman's furniture, which was drawn out and piled close upon them. The flames, also, from Mr. Akerman's house quickly spread to the chapel, and from the chapel to the cells, and made a gap for the mob to enter; thus, ere long, they were in riotous possession of the prison. All the prisoners, to the number of three hundred, comprising four under sentence of death and ordered for execution on the Thursday morning, were released. No attempts were made to check, and many to extend, the flames. Thus was Newgate, at that time the strongest, and as might have been supposed,

securest of all our English gaols, which had lately been rebuilt at a charge of no less than 140,000*l.*, lorded over that night by a frantic populace, and reduced to a smouldering ruin. Within a few hours, there was nothing left of the stately edifice, beyond some bare stone walls too thick and massy for the force of fire to bring down.

On the same Tuesday evening, other detachments of the mob in like manner broke open the new gaol at Clerkenwell, and set free the prisoners. The dwellings of three active magistrates, Mr. Hyde, Mr. Cox, and Sir John Fielding, were also attacked and gutted by the rioters. In many districts the inhabitants found themselves compelled by threats to illuminate their houses. But far fiercer was the gang which, towards midnight, gathered before the house of Lord Mansfield in Bloomsbury Square. Loud yells were raised against the Chief Justice, who, with Lady Mansfield had barely time to escape by a back-door, and take refuge in the house of a friend. Directly afterwards the mob poured in, carrying havoc and destruction through all the stately rooms. They had brought with them torches and combustibles, and kindled a fire in the street below, which they fed not only with the furniture and hangings, but with the pictures, volumes, and papers, which they tore down and threw over from the windows. Then perished an excellent library, formed by one of the most accomplished scholars of his age; books enriched by the handwriting of Pope and Boling-

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broke, and of his other literary friends, or by his own notes upon the margin. Then was lost an invaluable collection of familiar letters which Lord Mansfield had been storing for well nigh half a century, as materials, it was said, for memoirs of his times. Yet amidst all this ferocious havoc well worthy of the Goths or Vandals, the leaders of the mob showed something of a higher spirit. They would not allow the valuables to be carried off as booty, declaring that they acted from principle, and not for plunder. One ragged incendiary was even seen to cast into the fire a costly piece of plate, with an oath that it should never go in payment of Masses! *

Unhappily, the same scruples did not apply to wine. Lord Mansfield's cellar being forced open, its contents were freely distributed, and supplied the rioters with fresh incentives to their fury. Meanwhile, the flames, extending to the mansion, reduced it long ere morning to a bare and blackened shell. Strange as it may seem, all these outrages were committed in the hearing, and almost in the sight, of a detachment of the Foot Guards, which had arrived at nearly the commencement of the fray.

* See Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chief Justices, vol. ii. p. 524. The lines of Cowper on this outrage are perhaps among the most pleasing of his lesser poems. Well might he say of Lord Mansfield's books:

"Their pages mangled, burnt, and torn,
"Their loss was his alone;
"But ages yet to come shall mourn
"The burning of his own!"

But they had been restrained by the doubts which then prevailed, whether the troops had any legal right to fire upon the mob, unless a magistrate were present, first to read forth at full length all the provisions of the Riot Act. When a gentleman, a friend of Lord Mansfield, went to the officer in command, requiring him to enter the house and defend it, the officer replied that the Justices of the Peace had all run away, and that consequently he could or would do nothing.* When at length a magistrate was caught, and made to mumble through the clauses, the soldiers did advance and fire two volleys. It was then too late. The discharge might kill or maim some five or six poor drunken wretches, but could impress no salutary terror on the rest. They looked on without concern, some stupified and others maddened by their unwonted draughts of wine. Yet these were the very men who perhaps, a few hours before, might have slunk back in terror at the mere sight of a red coat. How forcibly do the events of that night illustrate what one of the principal sufferers by them, the Chief Justice, afterwards pronounced, that it is the highest humanity to check the infancy of tumults! †

Thus did that night pass in conflagration and

* Evidence of Sir Thomas Mills. (State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 664.)

† "I have more than once heard him say this," declared Lord Erskine on the trial of Thomas Walker, in 1794. (See his Speeches, vol. iii. p. 34.)

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dismay. Next morning, Wednesday the 7th of June, the conflagrations were arrested, but the dismay continued. The shops in most places were kept carefully closed. In many districts the householders endeavoured to secure themselves by chalking "No Popery" on their doors, or hanging blue silk from their windows. Still more effectual, perhaps, was the precaution of paying money to several of the recent rioters, who made their rounds to claim it, walking singly, and three of them mere boys; but each armed with an iron bar, torn from the railings in front of Lord Mansfield's house. One fellow, mounted on horseback, refused, it was said, to take any thing but gold. Yet amidst so much of horror there were not wanting, as usual, some points of ridicule. Thus, the Jews who lived in Houndsditch and Duke's Place, sharing in the common terror, wrote upon their shutters "This "house is a true Protestant." In other places the rioters, with perfect coolness and deliberation, recommenced their havoc. Dr. Johnson, who walked with a friend to see the ruins of Newgate, observed, as he went by, "the Protestants" (for so he calls them) plundering the Sessions' House, at the Old Bailey. He adds: "There were not, I believe, a "hundred; but they did their work at leisure, in "full security, without sentinels, and without tre-"pidation, as men lawfully employed in full day." Not less striking are the words of another eye-witness to these scenes. "If one could in decency "laugh, must not one laugh to see what I saw; a

"single boy, of fifteen years at most, in Queen "Street, mounted on a pent-house, demolishing "a house with great zeal, but much at his ease, "and throwing the pieces to two boys still younger, "who burnt them for their amusement, no one "daring to obstruct them? Children are plunder-"ing at noon day the city of London!"*

In the course of this Wednesday two separate attempts were made upon the Bank of England. Here, however, a party of soldiers had been providently stationed; and the rioters were so far intimidated by the strength with which they beheld it guarded, that their attacks were but feeble and soon desisted from. They were led on to the first by a brewer's servant, on horseback, who had decorated his horse with the chains of Newgate.† Elsewhere the mob met with more success. The King's Bench, the Fleet, the Marshalsea, and several other prisons were forced open, and the prisoners released. The toll-gates on Blackfriars Bridge were attacked and plundered of the money they contained. All these, and some other buildings, were then set on fire. As the night advanced

* Dr. Johnson to Mrs. Thrale, June 9. and Mr. Richard Burke to Mr. Champion, June 7. 1780. This letter bears the further date: "*in what was London.*" Many curious circumstances of these riots are derived from a "Plain and Succinct "Narrative" of them, which appeared in the same year, under the name of William Vincent, but written in fact by Thomas Holcroft, the dramatist. The story of the Jews in Houndsditch will be found at page 37. of this pamphlet.

† "Plain and Succinct Narrative," p. 33.

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the glare of conflagration might be seen to fill the sky from many parts. "The sight was dreadful," writes Dr. Johnson; and the number of the separate fires, all blazing at the same time, is computed at thirty-six. Happily this summer night was perfectly calm and serene; since the slightest wind might have stirred the flames, and reduced a great part of London to ashes. But the principal scene that night of conflagration, as of all tumult and horror, was Holborn. There the mob had burst open and set on fire the warehouses of Mr. Langdale, a Roman Catholic and a distiller, obnoxious to their attack from his religion, and still more so perhaps from his trade. His large stores of spirits were poured forth in lavish profusion, and taken up by pailfuls; the kennel ran gin, and men, women, and children were seen upon their knees eagerly sucking up the liquor as it flowed. Many of these poor deluded wretches were stirred to the most frantic fury; many more sank down in helpless stupefaction, and, too drunk to move, perished in the flames which had been kindled by themselves.

Up to nearly this time there had been disgraceful terror in the magistracy, and as disgraceful torpor in the Government. Some men thought mainly of their own escape; others seem to have imagined that the rage of the people, like some impetuous flood, must quickly exhaust itself and pass by. Even at the outset there had been no lack of military aid; this was gradually increased by expresses sent in all directions; until by Wednesday

the 7th, there could be mustered even at the lowest computation 10,000 men; besides which, several large bodies of Militia had been marched up in haste, from the neighbouring counties. Yet still these numerous forces could be of no avail in restoring order, so long as the scruple remained that they had no legal right to fire till one hour after the Riot Act had been publicly read. In this dilemma the first to show energy and determination was the King. It was from him, rather than from any of his subjects, that came the measures of protection so much needed and so long postponed. Till then, such had been the craven spirit of some men in authority that, according to the Duke of Grafton, in his Memoirs, even the Secretary of State's servants had worn in their hats, as a passport, the cockades of the rioters.

No further relying upon others, His Majesty, from his own impulse, called a Council, on Wednesday the 7th, and himself presiding, laid before the assembled Ministers the difficulty respecting the Riot Act. The whole Cabinet wavered, well remembering the excitement which had followed the letter of Lord Barrington in the riots of 1768, and the readiness, at that time, of juries to find verdicts against the officers and soldiers who had only done their duty. Happily for the peace, nay even the existence of London, the Attorney-General, Wedderburn, was present as assessor. When the King turned to him for his opinion, Wedderburn answered boldly, that he was convinced the Riot Act did not bear the construction put upon it. In his

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judgment, neither the delay of an hour, nor any such formality, is by law required, when the mob are engaged in a felony, as setting fire to a dwelling-house, and cannot be restrained by other means. The Ministers, gathering firmness from Wedderburn, concurred; and the King then said that this had been clearly his own opinion, though he would not venture to express it beforehand; but that now, as supreme magistrate, he would see it carried out. "There shall be at all events," he added, "one "magistrate in the kingdom who will do his duty!"

By the King's commands a Proclamation was immediately drawn up, and issued that same afternoon, warning all householders to keep themselves, their servants, or apprentices within doors, and announcing that the King's officers were now instructed to repress the riots by an immediate exertion of their utmost force. Such instructions were sent accordingly from the Adjutant-General's office: "In obedience to an order of the King in Council, "the military to act without waiting for directions "from the Civil magistrates." That evening, for the first time, the rioters found themselves confronted by a determination equal to their own. Bodies of Militia, or of regular troops, were sent straight to any points where uproar and havoc most prevailed. Thus, for instance, the Northumberland Militia, which had come that day by a forced march of twenty-five miles, were led at once by Colonel Holroyd into Holborn, amidst the thickest of the flames. A detachment of the Guards drove before

them the plundering party which had taken possession of Blackfriars Bridge. Here several were killed by the musketry, while others were thrown, or in their panic threw themselves, over the parapet into the Thames. Wherever the mob would not disperse, the officers gave the word, and the soldiers fired without further hesitation. Only in some cases, where the rioters had succeeded in obtaining arms, was any firing attempted in return; nor could oaken sticks and iron bars withstand, for more than a few moments, the onset of disciplined troops. Then were some of the worst plunderers in their fall both punished and detected. One young chimney-sweeper who was killed, was found to have forty guineas in his pocket. Appalling were the sights and sounds of that night; sleep banished from every eye; the streets thronged with people in wonder and affright; furniture hastily removed, in apprehension of the flames; the frantic yells of the drunken, and the doleful cries of the wounded, mingling with the measured tread of the soldiers' march, and the successive volleys of their musketry; and the whole scene illumined by the fitful glare of six and thirty conflagrations.

These tumults, so culpably neglected at their outset and grown to a height that threatened "to "lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps," could not be quelled at length without a loss of life almost as grievous as themselves. According to the Returns, sent in to Lord Amherst as Commander-in-Chief, upwards of 200 persons were shot

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dead in the streets; and 250 were lying wounded in the hospitals, of whom seventy or eighty within a short time expired. Yet these Returns are far from conveying a full statement of the numbers that perished. They take no account of the dead or dying whom their own associates in the fray carried off and concealed. They take no account of those victims to their own excesses, who, lying helpless beside the pailfuls or kennelfuls of gin, were smothered by the spreading flames, or overwhelmed by the falling houses. Dreadful as was the loss of life that night, it proved at least decisive. The conflagrations and the plunder were stopped; the incendiaries and the robbers were scared. On the morning of Thursday the 8th of June, no trace was to be seen of the recent tumults, beyond the smouldering ruins, the spots of blood upon the pavement, and the marks of shot upon the houses. No renewed attempt was made at riot, or even at gathering in the streets. The crowds which had been "as the "stars of heaven for multitude," waned like the stars before the day; and those who, on their first appearance, had wondered whence so many came, now expressed equal wonder where they could be gone. Parties of soldiers were encamped in convenient places, as in the Parks, the Museum Gardens, and Lincoln's Inn Fields, ready to act on any fresh emergency, had any such occurred. By their exertions a great number of disorderly persons, concerned in the late riots, were secured; several, it is said, being taken in the cells of New-

gate, attempting to rekindle the fire in those parts which had not been totally destroyed. Volunteer associations "for the defence of liberty and "property" were likewise formed, and joined by many of those who had suffered or had feared the most from the temporary absence of the lawful powers. Throughout this day, the shops continued shut from Tyburn to Whitechapel, and no business was transacted, except at the Bank of England. But the general tranquillity soon restored the public confidence; the shops were opened the next morning, the Courts of Law resumed their sittings, and the course of mercantile affairs returned to its customary channel.

On the same day, Friday the 9th, Lord George Gordon was apprehended, at his house in Welbeck Street, by a warrant from the Secretary of State. Had that measure been taken a week before, or had the House of Commons, on Friday the 2nd, exerted its own powers of commitment, as many members wished, the arrest might have tended to the repression of the riots, instead of being only the penalty for them. Lord George made no remark on his apprehension, beyond saying to the messengers, "If you are sure it is me you want, I "am ready to attend you." When brought before the Privy Council and examined, he is alleged to have shown very little either of sense or spirit; and his examination having concluded, he was duly committed to the Tower, on a charge of High Treason, and escorted by a numerous guard. At

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the same time other measures were adopted to calm the public mind. Thus, a rumour had been circulated, that the prisoners in the hands of Government would be subject to Martial Law. Against this rumour there was levelled a hand-bill, put forth by authority, declaring that no such purpose had ever been in the contemplation of Government, and that all persons in custody would be tried in due course, according to the usual forms. Another publication of the day attempted to counteract a far more extraordinary fear. It seems to denote a vague idea in the minds of many persons, as if there might be something in the gloves which the King wore, or in the wine which the King drank, to imbue him with the errors of Popery! Certain it is at least, that the following paragraph appears in the public prints: — "We are authorised to assure the public, that Mr. Bicknell, His Majesty's hosier, is as true and faithful a Protestant as any in His Majesty's dominions. We have likewise the best authority for saying, that His Majesty's wine-merchants, and many others, are also Protestants." *

Thus ended the Gordon riots, memorable beyond most others from the proof which they afford how slender an ability suffices, under certain circumstances, to stir, if not to guide, great masses of mankind; and how the best principles and feelings, if perverted, may grow in practice equal to the worst. Bitter was the shame with which the leading

* London Courant, June 8. 1780.

statesmen, only a few days afterwards, looked back to this fatal and disgraceful week. They had seen their lives threatened, and their property destroyed, at the bidding of a foolish young fanatic, not worthy to unloose the latchet of their shoes. Such dangers might be boldly confronted, such losses might be patiently borne; but how keen the pang to find themselves objects of fierce fury and murderous attack to that people whose welfare, to the best of their judgments, they had ever striven to promote! In such words as these does Burke pour forth the anguish of his soul: — "For four nights I kept "watch at Lord Rockingham's or Sir George "Savile's, whose houses were garrisoned by a "strong body of soldiers, together with numbers of "true friends of the first rank, who were willing to "share their danger. Savile House, Rockingham "House, Devonshire House, to be turned into "garrisons! Oh what times! We have all served "the country for several years — some of us for "nearly thirty — with fidelity, labour, and affec-"tion, and we are obliged to put ourselves under "military protection for our houses and our "persons!" *

In these riots, so great had been the remissness and timidity of Kennett, the Lord Mayor, that, at a later period, he became the object of a prosecution from the Attorney-General, and was convicted. One of his coadjutors, Alderman Bull, a most zealous No Popery man, might even be said to

* Burke to R. Shackleton, Corresp. vol. ii. p. 355.

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have countenanced the insurrection, by allowing the constables of his Ward to wear the blue cockade in their hats, and by appearing publicly arm-in-arm with Lord George Gordon. But another City magistrate and Alderman, John Wilkes, unexpectedly came forth as the champion of law and order. With great courage — that indeed he never wanted — he went, in the midst of the disturbances, to apprehend the printer of a seditious hand-bill; and he did his duty throughout, undeterred by mob clamours, and regardless of mob applause.

When on the 19th, according to adjournment, the Lords and the Commons met, the business concerning the late riots was opened by the King in a Speech from the Throne. Addresses in reply, thanking His Majesty for his parental care and concern, were moved and carried in both Houses. The Peers, however, had some discussion as to the lawfulness of the military measures which had been pursued. Then, with his usual air of serene and stately dignity, Lord Mansfield rose. He touched slightly, but severely, upon the inaction, in the first instance, of the executive Government; "which," however, he added, "it is not my part to censure. "My Lords, I do not pretend to speak from any "previous knowledge, for I never was present at "any consultation upon the subject, or summoned "to attend, or asked my opinion, or heard the "reasons which induced the Government to remain "passive so long and to act at last." Here, it is said, there was wonder expressed by the bystanders,

and scornful glances turned to the Treasury Bench. In another passage there was yet one more reflection upon the Civil Power, as liable to the charge either of neglect or "native imbecility." But the main stress of Lord Mansfield's speech was directed to the question of mere law. "I have not,"—thus he spoke at the outset—"I have not consulted "books; indeed, I have no books to consult." At this allusion, so gently and so gracefully made, to the recent outrage wreaked upon him, the assembled Peers, without breaking their reverential silence, showed all the sympathy that looks or gestures could express. Yet they had little cause to deplore his loss of books, when, as his speech proceeded, they found the loss supplied by his memory's rich store — when they heard him, with unanswerable force, and on strictly legal grounds, vindicate the employment of the troops. "His "Majesty," thus did Lord Mansfield conclude, "and those who have advised him, I repeat it, "have acted in strict conformity to the Common "Law. The military have been called in, and "very wisely called in, not as soldiers, but as "citizens. No matter whether their coats be red "or brown, they were employed, not to subvert, "but to preserve, the Laws and Constitution which "we all so highly prize."

When Lord Mansfield sat down, the Address, which he supported, and which the Dukes of Richmond and Manchester had in some degree impugned, was carried, without one dissentient voice.

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Bishop Newton, who was present, records this speech as one of the finest ever heard in Parliament; and it has ever since been deemed a landmark in that sphere of our Constitutional law. At the time, however, its legal doctrines did not wholly escape animadversion out of doors; and some critics muttered that Lord Mansfield seemed to think all the law-books in the country burnt together with his own.*

In the Commons, next day, the great Protestant petition was discussed; when the House agreed to five Resolutions, which Burke had in part prepared, and Lord North corrected.† It is pleasing to find these two distinguished men, estranged on almost every other subject, combined on the great principle of religious toleration. There was, then, no shrinking from past merits, no subservience to mob-cries. The Resolutions did indeed declare that all attempts to seduce the youth of this kingdom from the Established Church to Popery, were highly criminal according to the laws in force, and might be a proper subject of further regulation. But they went on to say, in terms no less full and explicit, that all endeavours to misrepresent the Act of 1778, tended to bring dishonour on the national character, and to discredit the Protestant religion. The same spirit of bold adherence to the principles, then so far from popular, of 1778, will be found to animate the speeches that night, both of Lord North and

* H. Walpole to Mason, June 29. 1780.

† See Lord North's private letter to Burke, in the Correspondence of the latter, vol. ii. p. 361.

Mr. Burke. With equal courage, and on still broader grounds, was put forth the argument of Fox. "I am a friend," he cried, "to universal "toleration, and an enemy to that narrow way of "thinking that makes men come to Parliament, not "for the removal of some great grievances felt by "them, but to desire Parliament to shackle and "fetter their fellow-subjects."

The same praise of firmness against popular clamours, can scarcely be awarded to Sir George Savile. We find him, if not recede from his opinions, at least falter in his tone. He seemed eager to explain away his former votes, and eager also to bring in, under his own name, the Bill against Popish conversions. His Bill went to deprive the Roman Catholics of the right of keeping schools, or receiving youth to board at their houses. Music-masters, drawing-masters, and some other teachers not taking boarders, were to be exempt from penalty. But, not satisfied even with these safeguards, as they were deemed, of the Protestant faith, Sir George moved another clause in the Committee, to prevent any Roman Catholics from taking Protestant children as apprentices; a clause which Lord Beauchamp and other members opposed as a restriction upon trade. Sir George's clause being, however, carried, Burke indignantly declared that he would attend no further the progress of the measure.*

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxi. p. 726. In his speech at Bristol, in the September following, Burke said: — "Among his (Sir George "Savile's) faults I really cannot help reckoning a greater de-

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Finally, the Bill passed the Commons, but was lost in the Lords.

Before the end of the Session—it was closed by the King in person, on the 8th of July—Lord North carried an Address, that an exact account might be taken of the losses and damages in the recent riots. The claims sent in accordingly to the Board of Works by various persons, and exclusive of the cost of the demolished gaols and public buildings, amounted to 130,000*l.** most of which sum, as assessed, was recovered by a rate on the several parishes concerned. Both Lord Mansfield and Sir George Savile declined to send in any claim for compensation; a forbearance to their honour, considering the high office of the one and the ample fortune of the other.

Before the end of the Session, also, the measures against the rioters in custody were in active progress. It had been resolved to try the Middlesex cases at the next Old Bailey Sessions, commencing on the 28th of June; and for the cases in Surrey to issue, without delay, a Special Commission. Over this Commission the Lord Chief Justice De Grey had notice sent him that he would be required to preside. But De Grey, whose health was failing, and whose nerves were shaken, was so startled at the thought of such a task that, sooner than under-

"gree of prejudice against that people (the Roman Catholics), "than becomes so wise a man." (Works, vol. iii. p. 393, ed. 1815.)

* Commons Journals, July 6. 1780. Annual Regist. 1780, p. 233.

t ake it, he sent in his resignation. Wedderburn immediately claimed for himself the long-coveted Chief Justiceship, and he obtained it, notwithstanding Lord North's natural reluctance to forego so able a coadjutor in the House of Commons. He was further gratified with a Peerage, by the title of Lord Loughborough. His promotion was commonly approved, and drew forth warm congratulations, even from political opponents. Nor did they forbear from honourable counsels. "My "Lord," wrote Burke, "I hope that, instead of "bringing the littleness of Parliamentary politics "into a Court of Justice, you will bring the square-"ness, the manliness, and the decision of a judicial "place into the House of Parliament where you are "just entering."*

Such high anticipations, it must be owned, were not altogether fulfilled. The speech with which the new Peer opened the Special Commission, on the 10th of July, was indeed much admired for its eloquence, and much applauded as falling in with the angry temper of that time. But, on cool retrospect, it was felt that its partial overstatements, its intemperate denunciations of men upon their trial, were far from becoming in a Judge. "At "present," writes one of his successors on the Bench, "no Counsel, even in opening a prose-"cution, would venture to make such a speech."†

* Letter, June 15. 1780. (Corresp. vol. ii. p. 356.)

† Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 141. Similar to his is the judgment of Lord Brougham.

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It so happened by good fortune for Lord George Gordon, that a legal technicality — and no law certainly so much abounded in these as our's — delayed the trial until the ensuing year, when a calmer temper in the public might be expected to prevail. But ere the month of July, 1780, had closed, all the other rioters in custody — no less than 135 — had been already tried. Of these about one half were found Guilty; and among the convicted — but he received a respite — was Edward Dennis, the common hangman. Finally, after full consideration of the cases and numerous respites, there were twenty-one persons left to undergo the extreme sentence of the law.

CHAPTER LXII.

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Reverting from the course of home affairs to the prosecution of the war, we find England, at this period, threatened or assailed in every quarter of the globe.—Ever since the Spaniards' declaration of war in 1779, Gibraltar had been closely invested. The events of that memorable siege will require and deserve a consecutive account, and that account will find its place at their close. Meanwhile, it may here be stated, that Admiral Sir George Rodney, who had been named to the chief command in the West Indies, was directed on his way to afford some relief to the beleaguered fortress. On this occasion, as on every other, Rodney more than fulfilled the expectations of his friends. At the beginning of his voyage, and of the month of January, he captured a rich Spanish convoy in the Bay of Biscay. On the 16th of the same month, he encountered the Spanish Admiral Langara, off Cape St. Vincent. The action, which continued till two hours after midnight, was well-contested, but the victory of the English was complete. Langara's own ship of eighty guns was taken, and three ships of the line besides, while four others were either sunk, blown up, or driven

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on shore. Of the whole Spanish fleet only four sail escaped into Cadiz Bay. Rodney pursuing his voyage and anchoring off Gibraltar, cheered the garrison by his news almost as much as by his succour. He sent forward some light ships, to afford relief, in like manner, to the English at Port Mahon; and these objects having been accomplished, he made the best of his way to the West Indies.

In that quarter the French fleet was commanded by Comte de Guichen; the Spanish, at a later period, by Admiral Solano. Rodney stood firm against both, even when combined, but was not able to bring them, as he wished, to a general engagement. At last, the three antagonists parted as though by consent. De Guichen convoyed to Europe the homeward-bound merchantmen of France; Solano put into the Havanna; and Rodney sailed for a time towards the North American coasts.

The victory off Cape St. Vincent was by no means our sole success in the European seas. As Admiral Digby was returning home with Rodney's Spanish prizes, he fell in with and took a French ship of the line, besides two vessels laden with military stores. Several other captures were made by other Captains. But in the summer, although our naval glories were not tarnished, our trading interests sustained a grievous blow. Count Florida Blanca, the Spanish Minister, had received intelligence from his spies in England, that the united fleets of West and East India men were about to

sail, with only two ships of war for their convoy. Laying his plan accordingly with great secresy and skill, he sent out a squadron with every ship that could be spared, to intercept these fleets at their point of separation off the Azores islands. The two English convoy-ships escaped, but scarce any of the convoy, and thus well-nigh sixty sail freighted with costly merchandise, and in part also with military stores for the defence of our distant settlements, were brought captive into Cadiz. Never before, it is said, was that harbour entered by so rich a prize.*

But besides the utmost exertions by sea, both of France and Spain, we had also, at this trying period, to withstand the claims of Neutral nations. These deemed their commerce impeded or their honour compromised by the Right of Search, which we had exercised ever since the beginning of the war. They were disposed to contend, in opposition to the principles of our Maritime law, and to the decisions of our Admiralty Courts, that a neutral flag should cover or protect the cargoes even of a hostile state. On this plea, if it had been yielded, the supplies most injurious to our interests might have been poured in without stint or measure, not only to any point on the French or Spanish coasts, but also to our own insurgent Colonies. With the Dutch more especially, as next to ourselves the most commercial nation, we had for some time past been engaged in discussions on that score. The

* Coxe, Bourbon Kings of Spain, vol. v. p. 58.

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complaints, however, did not come wholly from their side. In our arduous conflict we had found them lukewarm allies, or rather secret enemies. We accused them of giving direct encouragement to the American privateers in their West India islands. We accused them of receiving favourably in their European ports Paul Jones with the English prizes he had made. And we required from them, but in vain, military succours in the war, according to the positive stipulations in their treaty of 1716.

The memorials and counter-memorials on these subjects were transmitted in part by Count Welderen, the Dutch Minister in London, and in part by Sir Joseph Yorke, who for upwards of a quarter of a century had been the English Minister at the Hague. In the midst of this paper warfare and of the accumulating bales of protocols, some of the points in dispute were brought to a practical issue. On the first day of the New Year, 1780, a Dutch fleet of merchant-ships proceeding to the Mediterranean, and convoyed by one of their Admirals, Count Byland, fell in with an English squadron under Commodore Fielding. The Dutch commander refused to allow the pretensions of the English. He fired upon the boats which the Commodore sent to search his vessels; poured a broadside into Fielding's own flag-ship; and then, finding the act of hostility returned, struck his colours. The greater part of the convoy made their escape; but seven sail, besides Count Byland's man of war, were carried to Spithead. It was

found that they were laden with military stores for the use of the French and Spaniards; and thus, on the event becoming known to the two Governments of St. James's and the Hague, there arose a train of angry recriminations from both. You supply our enemies with arms, said the English. You insult our flag, said the Dutch.

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But the main importance of this affair was the impression which it produced at Petersburg. News had come there some time since, that the Spanish cruisers in the Mediterranean had seized two Russian trading vessels, freighted with corn for the use of the garrison of Gibraltar. At these tidings the Empress Catherine had been highly incensed. "My commerce," she was fond of saying, "is my "child;" * and as such she was eager to protect it. She was already preparing some retaliatory measures against Spain, when the event of the 1st of January enabled her Minister Count Panin, an enemy of England, to give a more general scope to her resentments. On the 26th of February, she issued her famous Declaration to the Belligerent Courts, asserting in the strongest terms the maxims, that free ships make free goods; that contraband articles are only such as a treaty stipulates; and that blockades to be acknowledged must be stringent and effective. This Declaration, though professedly aimed at all the Belligerents without distinction, in truth struck England solely, or almost solely, as the preponderating Power at sea.

* See the Malmesbury Papers, vol. i. page 355.

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It became the basis of the "Armed Neutrality," as it was termed; an alliance between Russia, Sweden, and Denmark, to support the claims of Neutrals, if needful, even by the force of arms. To this alliance other Neutral Powers, as Holland and Prussia, afterwards acceded. Spain and France speedily gave in their adhesion to the Czarina's code; Spain declaring that she had infringed it only on compulsion to requite the violence of England. Thus, in addition to all her other enemies at this period, in the Old World and the New, England was left to maintain, single-handed, against a league of the Baltic Powers, her principles of Maritime Law.*

It might seem indeed as if, at that period, the other nations of the earth, jealous of our long ascendancy, or mindful of their past humiliations, were all combining to ruin or despoil us. Worse still, our own past errors or misdeeds had turned against us a large share of our native strength, had arrayed in North America the arms, and in many parts of Ireland the feelings, of our fellow-countrymen in the opposite ranks. Of one thing, however, in those times an Englishman may well be

* Besides the many older writers on the "Armed Neutrality," I would commend to English readers, an account of it in the unpretending, but candid and very able, volume recently published by Mr. W. H. Trescot, in America. (Diplomacy of the Revolution, New York, 1852.) The principal points at issue have been condensed by M. Thiers, in a clear and masterly sketch. (Le Consulat et l'Empire, vol. ii. pp. 106—110. ed. 1845.)

proud. As our enemies increased, our spirit grew. Ministers who had seemed unequal to far inferior exigencies, now girded themselves up to grapple with the growing dangers. Sailors and soldiers, yeomen and Militia felt, each man in his own sphere, the special call upon him, and seemed resolute to show that, although out-numbered, we were not over-matched. Our navy was so well directed and so bravely manned as to wage war, on no unequal terms, in the seas of Europe, of Africa, of Asia, and of America, against all the best navies of the world. Our troops, with so many other duties or defences in opposite quarters of the globe, yet, as will presently be seen, in the transactions of that year in North America, displayed an augmented energy, and achieved important successes.

The motives that weighed with the British chiefs in North America, to transfer the war from the Middle to the Southern States, have been already explained. On the day after Christmas, 1779, Sir Henry Clinton, with about 5,000 men, embarked on board the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot. He left behind him at New York, to defend that important post, a sufficient force under General Knyphausen. His voyage proved most stormy and unprosperous; he lost several of his transports and all his cavalry horses, and was nearly seven weeks at sea. Immediately on landing he took measures, as he had designed, for investing Charleston, while Admiral Arbuthnot (with whom, however, the General was not on cordial terms) was to second

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the enterprise with his ships, up the Ashley river. Clinton, even after some reinforcements he received, could muster no more than 7,000 men; and the besieged were almost as many. They were commanded by General Benjamin Lincoln from the Northern States, and strengthened by a squadron of nine ships of war, under Commodore Whipple. Sufficient time had been left them, for constructing some considerable works of defence by the assistance of French engineers; and further inland, another American force was gathering for their relief. Against this last, however, the English General, having succeeded in remounting his cavalry, sent Colonel Tarleton with a party of horse; and so active and able was that officer, that the American force was surprised and utterly routed at Monk's Corner.

Having thus provided against the chances of relief, Sir Henry Clinton pushed the siege of Charleston with great vigour and success. At last, on the 11th of May, the Americans declared themselves willing to accept the terms of capitulation, which they had formerly refused; the articles were signed next day, and the English took possession of the town. The Americans, who laid down their arms on this occasion, marching out with certain honours of war, were upwards of 5,000. Of these the Continental troops and seamen were to remain prisoners, and the Militiamen to return to their homes upon parole. All their naval force was either destroyed or seized, together with a

large amount of stores, and 400 pieces of artillery. Many other events in the American war, as the surprise at Trenton and the surrender of Saratoga, were no doubt of far higher moment in their consequences; but viewed as a military feat, as the result of skill and strategy combined with valour, this may, perhaps, be pronounced the most brilliant of all. The news of it reached England exactly at the close of Lord George Gordon's riots; and tended, in no small degree, to restore the public confidence, and to cheer the public mind.

Charleston being now in possession of the English, their next object was to secure, as far as possible, the general submission of the province. With this object Sir Henry Clinton issued several Proclamations, inviting support, and assuring of favour and protection, all inhabitants who would return to their allegiance. Many hundreds did indeed consent to enrol themselves as loyal Militia, under Major Ferguson. At the same time, Sir Henry sent out several small expeditions to the interior of the country. One detachment, under Colonel Tarleton, fell in with a body of Virginians commanded by Colonel Buford, at Wax-haws. Here the English were not only inferior in numbers, but exhausted by long marches beneath the summer sun, having in fifty-four hours come 105 miles; nevertheless, in the conflict which ensued, Buford's troops were utterly broken. The Americans could not deny the victory; but have alleged that the

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slaughter was needlessly great, Tarleton's party having refused quarter to their opponents after they had ceased to resist and laid down their arms.*

The Americans in the Southern States were now greatly dispirited. During the siege of Charleston, they had expected assistance, but in vain, first from the Spanish force in Florida, and next from the French fleet in the West Indies. They saw South Carolina apparently won back to the Royal cause, and with some probability that North Carolina would follow the example. But, at this crisis, intelligence reached Sir Henry Clinton, that the Americans upon the Hudson were on the point of receiving considerable succours; that a French fleet sent to their aid, with several French regiments on board, might soon be expected off the New England coasts. Sir Henry deemed it his duty to provide in person, for the safety of his principal charge. In the first days of June he accordingly re-embarked for New York, with a portion of his force; leaving, however, about 4,000 men under Lord Cornwallis's command. The instructions given to Lord Cornwallis, were to consider the maintenance of Charleston, and in general of South Carolina, as his main and indispensable objects; but consistently with these, he was left at liberty to make "a solid move," as it was termed, into North Carolina, if he judged it proper, or if he found it possible.

Charles, the second Earl, and afterwards the first

* Gordon's Hist. vol. iii. p. 361. Ramsay, vol. ii. p. 158.

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Marquis, Cornwallis was born in 1738. Early in life he had embraced the military profession, which he pursued with undeviating honour, though variable success. In him the want of any shining talents was, in great measure, supplied by probity, by punctuality, by a steady courage, by a vigilant attention to his duties. In 1766, on the Declaratory Bill, he had shown his conciliatory temper to the Colonies; denying with Lord Camden and only three Peers besides, any right we had to tax them while they remained unrepresented in the House of Commons.* When, however, the war broke forth, he acted solely as became a soldier. Under Lord Cornwallis was now serving a young officer of no common spirit and daring, destined, like himself, to attain, at another period, the highest office that an Englishman, out of England, can fill—the office of Governor-General of India. This was Francis Lord Rawdon, subsequently better known, first, as Earl of Moira, and then as Marquis of Hastings. In the ensuing battle of Camden, where he held the second rank and played a distinguished part, he was not yet twenty-six years of age; and he had already gained renown, five years before, in the battle of Bunker's Hill.†

* See vol. v. p. 209., and the pointed observations of Wilkes, on referring, some years later, to that debate. (Parl. Hist. vol. xxi. p. 893.) Horace Walpole, writing from looser reminiscences, transfers the scene to the debate upon the Stamp Act, in 1765. (Letter to Mason, Nov. 28. 1781, ed. 1851.)

† "Lord Rawdon behaved to a charm: his name is established for life." General Burgoyne to Lord Stanley, June 25. 1775. (American Archives, vol. ii. p. 1095.)

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While the siege of Charleston still went on, the Congress, alarmed for the two Carolinas, directed Washington to send thither a considerable detachment of his army, under Baron de Kalb. On the surrender of Lincoln at Charleston, De Kalb became the senior officer in the Southern States; but in the summer, as the alarm increased, the Congress appointed General Gates above him to the chief command. The affair at Saratoga, though in truth little owing to Gates, had given him, up to this time, a high reputation for military skill; and his presence in the South, it was imagined, would go far to secure the public confidence. In the rapid warfare which ensued, both armies were exposed to great sufferings from toilsome marches, in a well-nigh tropic clime. The Americans, as Gates led them onwards, had to make their way through a country of sand-hills, swamps, and in their own expressive phrase, "pine-barrens." So scarce were provisions in their camp, that at one time there were strong appearances of mutiny. They complained that they had little to eat, beyond the lean cattle picked up in the woods. Their whole army was under the necessity of using green corn and peaches in the place of bread; and they subsisted, for some days, upon peaches alone.*

* Ramsay's Hist. vol. ii. p. 164. So abundant are the peach-tree woods in that country, that the fruit is used to fatten swine; "and there can be no doubt," says Mr. Phillips, "that "they are indigenous to Louisiana, as well as to Persia; "although in many parts of America the peach is regarded as

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The approach of this new army wrought a great change in the Carolinians. Many who had joined the Royal Standard now again forsook it; some under circumstances of especial treachery. One Lisle, for example, who had not only taken the oath of allegiance, but accepted military rank as a King's officer, waited just long enough to supply his battalion with clothes, arms, and ammunition from the Royal stores, and then quietly led them back to his old friends. On his defection, Lisle first joined Colonel Sumpter, an active and able partisan from South Carolina, who now began a Guerrilla warfare, but who was twice repulsed with loss; once at Rocky Mount, and once at Hanging Rock.

The English in South Carolina held, at this time, a line of posts extending from the Pedee river to the fortified village of Ninety Six.* Their principal force, however, lay towards the centre, at Camden; it was commanded by Lord Rawdon, who had hutted his men to protect them from the summer heats. Earl Cornwallis, upon the news

"a foreign fruit, having been introduced from Europe before "Louisiana had been explored." (Pomarium Britannicum, p. 285. ed. 1822.)

* One American author (of rather a lively imagination) tells us that the name of Ninety Six is derived "from the uniform "excellence of the soil. The two numbers which compose its "name, viewed on any side, will express the same quantity!" On the other hand, Colonel Henry Lee far more drily says:— "Ninety Six takes its name from the circumstance of its being "ninety-six miles distant from the principal village of the "Cherokee Indians." (Campaign of 1781, in the Carolinas, p. 393. ed. 1824.)

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of Gates's advance, hastened in person to the post of danger. At two o'clock in the morning of the 16th of August, the vanguards of the two armies met. A skirmish ensued, which, after daybreak, became a general engagement. Lord Cornwallis had only 2,000 men: the Americans, more than twice as many; these however were, in great part, raw and ill-disciplined Militia. The Virginians, on their left wing, fled almost at the first fire, throwing down their arms, bayonets and all; and the centre followed. On their right the Maryland and Delaware troops bravely maintained their position for some time, but at last were routed also. General Gates has been accused of leaving the field too soon, and before the day was irretrievably lost. Never was a battle more decisive. Besides several hundred slain and as many captured, the Americans lost all their artillery and stores; and being chased full twenty miles by the cavalry of Tarleton, they were so utterly scattered and dispersed, that not even the smallest of their battalions remained entire, and that nearly all their officers were parted from their respective troops. Their whole track was strewn with arms and baggage flung away. Among the prisoners was their second in command, Baron de Kalb, who died next day of his wounds.

The victory at Camden was not the only success of the English at this time. Active as was Colonel Sumpter, he was surprised and routed at the Catawba ford by the no less active Colonel Tarleton. Lord Cornwallis now advanced to the town

of Charlotte, and formed a plan for the conquest of North Carolina. In the first place, however, he deemed it requisite to take measures for securing the South province. Highly incensed at such signal acts of treachery as Lisle's, he had recourse to some most severe orders in return. The penalty of death was denounced against all Militiamen who, after serving with the English, went off to the insurgents. Several of the prisoners in the battle of Camden — men taken with arms in their hands and with British protections in their pockets — were hanged. Other such examples were made at Augusta and elsewhere. Some persons who had been living on their parole at Charleston, and who, in spite of their parole, carried on a secret correspondence with their insurgent countrymen, were shipped off to St. Augustine. A Proclamation was issued, sequestering the estates of those who had been the most forward to oppose the establishment of the Royal authority within the province. Perhaps these measures exceeded the bounds of justice; certainly they did the bounds of policy. This was shown by the fatal event, when on the overthrow of the Royalist cause in South Carolina, the measures of Lord Cornwallis became the plea for other executions, and for every act of oppression that resentment could devise.

Within the more limited sphere of his own command, Lord Rawdon had recourse to, or at the very least announced, some measures still severer, and far less to be justified. In a letter to one of

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his officers, which was intercepted, we find, for example, what follows :—"I will give the inhabitants "ten guineas for the head of any deserter, belonging "to the volunteers of Ireland; and five guineas "only, if they bring him in alive." No amount of provocation or of precedent in his enemies, no degree of youthful ardour in himself, are at all adequate to excuse these most blamable words. When, however, he was called upon to vindicate them, Lord Rawdon declared that many of his threats were meant only "to act on the fears and "prejudices of the vulgar," and by no means to be carried into practical effect.*

Up to this time, the progress of the British in the Carolinas had been uniformly prosperous. But early in October, Major Ferguson led forward his Militia too far or too incautiously. The backwoodsmen, from the Alleghany Hills, armed with well-tried rifles, and collecting in large numbers, surrounded this body of Royalists, who, after a brave resistance, were either killed or made prisoners; Major Ferguson himself being among the slain. This disaster, which took place at the pass of the King's Mountain, induced Lord Cornwallis to retreat from Charlotte, and to postpone, until next year, his military schemes in North Carolina.

At New York, the fleet of Admiral Arbuthnot, with Sir Henry Clinton's troops on board, had no

* Lord Rawdon's intercepted letter (July 1. 1780), together with his subsequent explanation addressed to Sir Henry Clinton, will be found in the Appendix to Washington's Writings, vol. vii. pp. 554 and 555.

sooner sailed for Charleston, than the port was closed by intense frost, with great falls of snow. A winter so severe had not been known in that climate, within the memory of man. Not only the North River, but the straits and channels which surround it, were covered with ice so thick and firm as to allow the passage of even the heaviest artillery. The people at New York, including the British officers and soldiers, suffered the utmost distress from the scarcity of fuel and provisions.* And though the rigorous season might preclude any operations against them in the open field, it seemed to expose them to another danger—that the American army might advance along the ice and attack New York from the water side.

Washington, however, was in no condition to avail himself of this opportunity. Never was his army in worse plight; never had the Congress shown itself more neglectful of his wants. He could only subsist at all by levying, from his head-quarters at Morristown, military contributions from the surrounding districts. To this oppressive system it was most unwillingly that his generous spirit stooped; and the supplies thus obtained proved no less scanty than illegal. Even at the close of winter, the General declares that:—"We are constantly on the point of starving."† Nor were

* This distress is described, in her usual lively manner, by Madame de Riedesel. (*Dienst-Reise*, pp. 249—259.) In a single night snow fell to the depth of four or five feet.

† To Major-General Howe, April 28. 1780. General

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his numbers by any means such as the Congress had promised and decreed; on paper, he had 35,000 men; in fact, less than 12,000. Thus until midsummer, 1780, the American army in the Central States remained almost wholly at gaze. There were only two slight and unsuccessful attacks: the one by Lord Stirling, on Staten Island; the other by General Wayne, at Bergen Point. The English, on their part, while expecting Clinton's return, abstained from every enterprise, except a landing in the Jerseys, which was ill planned, and ended only in the capture and conflagration of Springfield.

Under these circumstances, it was with especial pleasure that Washington welcomed the return of La Fayette, as the bearer of cheering intelligence. In April, the young Marquis arrived at Boston with the news that his Government were preparing, and would speedily despatch, an armament of sea and land forces, for the succour of America. In the July following, the promised armament appeared off the Rhode Island coast; it consisted of seven sail of the line, and several smaller ships of war, with about 6,000 troops on board. This was called only the first division; but the second, though announced, never reached America. The

Greene, who was then with Washington as Quarter-Master General, writes thus, a fortnight later, to President Reed: "The army has not four days' provision of meat in the "world. . . . The great man is confounded at his situation, "but appears to be reserved and silent. I write to you in the "fullest confidence." (Life of Reed, vol. ii. p. 191.)

fleet was commanded by the Chevalier de Ternay, and the army by the Comte de Rochambeau. In framing the instructions for the latter, the French Ministry had shown a wise and provident forethought. To guard against jealousy between the two so lately hostile nations, they directed that Rochambeau and his troops should, in all cases, be under the orders of Washington, who was appointed to the rank of Lieutenant-General in the French armies. American officers were to command French officers of equal rank; and in all military acts or capitulations, the American Generals were to sign the first.

The officer to whom this important trust had been committed, the Comte de Rochambeau, had seen some service in the campaigns against Prince Ferdinand. But born as he was in the worst age of French generalship, he did not rise above the level of his contemporaries, the Clermonts and the Soubises. So acute a judge of men as Mirabeau, speaks with the utmost contempt of his capacity. Another close observer represents him as well skilled in his manœuvres, but too fond of displaying them by demonstrations upon his snuff-box or his dining-table.*

* "M. de Rochambeau ne parlait que de faits de guerre, "manœuvrait et prenait des dispositions militaires dans la "plaine, dans la chambre, sur la table, sur votre tabatière si "vous la tiriez de votre poche." (Mem. du Duc de Lauzun, 1822, p. 335.) Yet the writer admits that Rochambeau understood his profession well. "Cet homme tout à fait incapable" —says, on the contrary, Mirabeau. (Corresp. avec le Comte de La Marck, vol. ii. p. 233.)

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Sir Henry Clinton, who had returned to New York before the arrival of the French, was eager to attack them in Rhode Island on their first landing, and while still unsupported by their American allies. But the indecision, and consequent delay, of Admiral Arbuthnot, lost him this auspicious chance. The English troops for the expedition were at last embarked and despatched; but finding M. de Rochambeau already re-enforced and fortified, they had to come back without a blow. The English fleet, however, being strengthened by the arrival of Admiral Graves, with six ships of war, was now considerably superior to the French, so that Arbuthnot was enabled to blockade the latter closely, within the harbour of Newport. In this state of things, Rochambeau deemed it necessary that the army also should remain at Newport, lest in its absence, and without its aid, the fleet should be attacked and overpowered. And thus the efforts of the great French armament, from which so much had been expected in America, were stopped short, or brought down to nothing, at the very outset, and during, it may be said, the whole remainder of that year.

Nevertheless, Sir Henry Clinton, a cool and far-sighted commander, did not allow himself to be elated, either by the Admiral's superiority at Newport, or by his own successes in the South. At the end of August, he sent home one of his most trusted officers, Brigadier-General Dalrymple, with a secret letter to the Secretary of State. Already with a

just view of the growing difficulties round him, he had pressed for his recall. He now pointed out, not merely the evil of the want of cordiality between himself and the Admiral (for in such appointments a change might soon be made), but the utter impossibility of pursuing the war without new forces. The troops which he had designed for the Rhode Island service, and which his Embarkation Return showed as 6,000 men, were all that he could reckon on for any other enterprise. With these 6,000 he trusted that the peninsula between the Chesapeak and the Delaware might be reduced. But after its reduction, 4,000 would be needful to hold it. "Arrived," he adds, "at that stage of success, a glance upon "the Returns of the army, divided into garrisons, "and reduced by casualties on the one part, with "the consideration of the task yet before us on "the other, would, I fear, renew the too just re-"flection that we are by some thousands too weak "to subdue this formidable rebellion."*

The compulsory inactivity of Rochambeau was alike distasteful to Washington and to himself. They were both eager to devise some means for commencing forward operations; but none such appeared, while the superiority of the English naval

* The secret despatch of Clinton, dated August 25. 1780, and derived from the State Paper Office, will be found in the first part of my Appendix. The second part comprises the King's reflections upon it, taken from the North MSS. They were written September 26. the despatch having arrived in London only the day before.

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force continued. However, the two commanders agreed to confer in person on the subject; and they met accordingly at Hartford, in Connecticut, on the 21st of September. During his absence on this occasion, Washington left his army under the charge of General Greene. As a symbol of friendship to his new allies, he directed all the Continental officers to wear cockades of black and white intermixed; the former colour being that of the American cockade, and the latter that of the French. Then, too, perhaps, the Fleurs de Lys of France may have floated, side by side, with the American stars and stripes. Yet it is by no means clear when the latter standard was, for the first time, used. Nor, strange to say considering its recent origin, is the meaning of that symbol known, with any certainty, to the nation that bears it. One living writer in the United States supposes, that these stars and stripes may have reference to the Mullets and Bars on Washington's heraldic shield*; a new and ingenious, but scarcely probable, conjecture, to be admitted only if no better can be found.

The younger Frenchmen, both during the interview of the chiefs at Hartford, and in their subsequent visits to Washington's head-quarters, were, it seems, most agreeably surprised by what they saw. Thus writes one of them:—"I am bound to "say, that the General Officers of the American "army have a very soldier-like and becoming de-

* North American Review, for July, 1852, p. 131. (See also the sixth volume of this History, p. 64.)

"meanour. All those officers whom their duty "puts forward in respect to strangers, combine a "great deal of politeness with a great deal of "ability. Nor do their head-quarters betoken "either inexperience or penury. When one sees "the battalion of Guards of the Commander-in-"Chief encamped within the precincts of his "house; nine waggons, allotted for his equipage, "ranged within his court; grooms in great num-"bers, holding ready the very fine horses that be-"long to the Generals, or to their Aides-de-camp; "when one observes the perfect order maintained "within these precincts, where the guards are "regularly placed, and where the drums beat both "an especial Reveille and an especial Retreat— "one feels tempted to apply to the Americans "what Pyrrhus said, on reconnoitering the Roman "camp:—'Truly, these so-called barbarians have "'nothing barbarous in their discipline.'"*

This picture, it will be seen, is of entire regularity and subordination, such as the longest-established Government could not surpass. Indeed, some critics may doubt whether, instead of slighting forms and titles, as Revolutionary chiefs are wont to do, the founders of the American Union might not indulge in them too much. Such, at least, was the opinion of an English Colonel, who

* Voyages du Marquis de Chastellux, vol. i. p. 121. ed. 1786. It is remarkable, that the same application of Pyrrhus's saying occurred to Burke at nearly the same time. (Speech on Economical Reform, Feb. 11. 1780.)

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had taken service with them, and whom they had raised to their highest rank—General Charles Lee. "For my own part," he cries, "I would as lief "they put ratsbane into my mouth as the "'Excellency' with which I am daily crammed!"*

It is not to be supposed, however, that the American people at large were then well versed in the pageantries of war. The contrary may be justly presumed, from the description which an eye-witness—a chaplain in Rochambeau's army—gives us of a great review at Philadelphia. There the native spectators were so far misled by a large amount of braid and silver lace, as to mistake a courier for a Commander-in-Chief. Whenever this servant went up to his master, (one of the Colonels,) to receive, it was supposed that he had come to give, an order! †

At this time the important fortress of West Point, the key of the upper province of New York, was held by General Benedict Arnold. No officer on the American side had more highly distinguished himself, in the earlier stages of the war. It was he who led the daring expedition through the wilderness upon Quebec. It was he who bore the brunt

* To "His Excellency" Patrick Henry, July 29. 1776, printed in the American Archives, vol. i. p. 631. The whole letter is very curious.

† Voyage dans l'Amerique de M. l'Abbé Robin en 1781, p. 89.; also as cited in Reed's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 307. The Abbé candidly adds:—"Les bons Pensilvaniens sont bien loin "de nous pour l'etiquette, comme nous bien loin d'eux pour la "législation."

of those hard-fought actions which resulted in the surrender of a British force at Saratoga. His wounds in that campaign disabled him, for a time, from active service; but when Philadelphia was relinquished by Sir Henry Clinton, Arnold was appointed to the command in that city. There he married a young and beautiful lady, one of the heroines of the recent MISCHIANZA*, and as that very circumstance implies, of a family well affected to the Royal cause. As the military chief of a great town, Arnold displayed arrogance in his demeanour and ostentation in his style of living. By the former he gave offence to the Philadelphians, by the latter he involved himself in difficulties. Complaints — the more readily, no doubt on account of his haughty manners, — were brought against him on divers petty points, as that he had used some public waggons, even though he paid for them, to remove some private property. He was brought before a Court Martial, which subjected him to long and vexatious delays, acquitting him at last of the principal charges, but finding him Guilty of the rest; and their sentence being upon the whole that he should receive a public reprimand from the Commander-in-Chief.

Conscious as was Arnold of the eminent services which he had rendered, and even in his pride overrating them, he chafed at such requital. At the same time, and in the midst of his pecuniary distresses, the claims which he had preferred to his

* See vol. vi. p. 371.

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Government for money spent in Canada, were in part disallowed. With these personal causes of resentment there mingled perhaps some others of a public kind. He had always disapproved an alliance with France, and viewed its progress with great aversion and jealousy. The strength of these various feelings and motives in his mind may be estimated from the extreme resolution to which they now gave rise. Arnold determined to change sides and to join the Royalists, betraying to them at the same time any secrets, or any post, with which he might be entrusted.

With these views, which, perhaps even to his own mind, were only unfolded by degrees, Arnold had already begun a secret correspondence with Sir Henry Clinton, through Sir Henry's Aide-de-camp, and afterwards Adjutant-General, Major John André. He signed his letters merely "Gus-" tavus," disguising his handwriting, and giving no other clue to his real name; but from time to time he sent intelligence which proved to be authentic and important. Thus the attention of Sir Henry was effectually roused, and he desired his Aide-de-camp to keep up the correspondence with care, André signing his own letters as "John Ander-" son." Still "Gustavus" did not reveal himself; but on combining and weighing a great variety of slight circumstances, Clinton became convinced that his secret correspondent could be no other than General Arnold; and on this persuasion the exchange of letters was continued.

Even before the close of his long-protracted trial, Arnold had found it necessary to relinquish his command in Philadelphia. But Washington, who never suspected his fidelity, and who knew his talents, was anxious to employ him in the next campaign. Arnold represented himself as still suffering from his wounds, and scarcely equal to active service in the field; but he sought, and obtained, the charge of West Point, and of all the other posts in the Highlands. He arrived at his new station, at the beginning of August, 1780, and had already transmitted to Sir Henry Clinton a direct proposal to surrender himself, "in such a "manner as to contribute every possible advantage "to His Majesty's arms." The vast importance of this overture could not fail to be discerned by the British chief. To gain possession of West Point and its dependent posts, with their garrisons and military stores, and with the command of the Hudson's river which they implied, and by the same blow to strike distrust and terror into the very heart of the American ranks, was an object certainly, at that time, second to no other towards the successful prosecution of the war. 1780.

Sir Henry Clinton, therefore, eagerly applied himself to conclude the negotiation with Arnold, assuring him of all the rank and emoluments which he could expect in the British service. A favourable time for the final arrangement seemed to be afforded by the departure of Washington from his army to meet Count Rochambeau at Hartford.

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First, however, it was necessary that a meeting should be held with Arnold to settle the whole plan. The American General insisted that the officer sent out to confer with him, should be no other than Major André, through whose hands the whole previous correspondence had passed. To this Sir Henry agreed, without any idea of danger to his gallant young friend. For he strictly enjoined him, before his departure, not to enter the American lines; not to assume any disguise of dress; and not to be the bearer of any written communications by which the nature of his business could be traced.

Major John André was, at this time, not yet thirty years of age. His parents, though residing in England, were natives of Geneva, to which town, also, they sent their son for education. Being designed for a merchant, he was next transferred to a counting-house, in London. There, after some years, becoming acquainted with a beautiful young lady, Miss Honora Sneyd, he indulged a romantic and not unrequited passion, which, however, her family successfully opposed. The young lady sighed a while; but her tuneful friend, Miss Seward, saw, as she describes it, these sighs "disperse like April storms." She became the second wife of Mr. Edgeworth, the father, by his first wife, of Maria Edgeworth, the justly celebrated writer of so many admirable tales. André, on the other hand, to seek relief from his sorrows, joined the British army in Canada, with a Lieutenant's commission, at the outbreak of the war. He shared

in the capitulation of St. John's to the insurgent General Montgomery, during the autumn of 1775. Soon afterwards he wrote as follows, to a friend: — "I have been taken prisoner by the Americans, "and stripped of every thing, except the pic- "ture of Honora, which I concealed in my mouth. "Preserving that, I yet think myself fortunate." The miniature which he mentions, had been painted by himself. His person was handsome, his manners were engaging; and with his skill as a draughtsman, which was considerable, he combined a taste for poetry, and a knowledge of several branches of literature. Nor had he neglected the studies of his own profession; on the contrary, he gave promise in it of considerable future eminence. Being exchanged with other prisoners, after some months' captivity, he was selected, without any other recommendation than his merit, as Aide-de-Camp, first by General Grey, and next by Sir Henry Clinton. So high was the esteem entertained for his abilities, that in the winter of 1779, Sir Henry used most strenuous and, at last, successful exertions, to obtain for him, from the Ministry in England, the rank of Major together with the post of Adjutant-General.

This accomplished young officer, so well worthy a happier fate, was on board the Vulture sloop of war, which Sir Henry had sent up the Hudson; and went on shore by night in a boat despatched for him by Arnold. He met the American General on the western bank, and on neutral ground; but

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their conference not being entirely concluded as the dawn was approaching, André was prevailed upon to accompany Arnold to a house within the enemy's lines. There they agreed on the precise means by which the works at West Point were to be made over to an English expedition ascending the Hudson for that purpose. Having terminated this arrangement, the next great object for André was to return on board the Vulture sloop. But the boatmen demurred, and refused to convey him, so that it became necessary to adopt some other plan. He was prevailed upon to lay aside his uniform; to accept a pass from Arnold, under the name of John Anderson; and first crossing the river at the King's Ferry, thence to make his way on horseback, with a guide. He was also induced to take charge of divers papers in the handwriting, though without the signature, of Arnold, explaining the state of the works at West Point, and indicating the scheme for its surrender; an imprudence the more signal since, as Sir Henry Clinton declares in his Memoirs, both Arnold and André must have known that these papers were not wanted for his information.

Without any mischance, André succeeded in passing the American lines, and was again on neutral ground, when on approaching the village of Tarrytown, three Militiamen, who were playing at cards near the road side, sprung upon and seized his horse. In the first moments of surprise, André avowed himself to be a British officer; upon which,

disregarding his pass, and proceeding to search his person, they found the secret papers concealed within his boots. They rejected the offer of his watch and money, and of a larger present from New York if they would let him go, and they took him with his papers before Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson, who commanded their nearest military post. The Colonel, as Washington said afterwards, appears to have shown "egregious folly."* He formed no suspicion of Arnold, although he read the papers, and although, as is alleged, he knew the handwriting. He decided upon detaining André as a prisoner, and forwarding the papers to Washington; but at the same time wrote to Arnold a full account of the whole transaction. Thus Arnold would become apprised that his treachery was on the eve of detection; since the papers were on their way to Washington, and since Washington, at all events, was well acquainted with the hand.

The house in which General Arnold had fixed his residence, Robinson's House by name, was not within the lines of West Point, but on the opposite or eastern bank of the Hudson, and two or three miles lower down the stream. There, on the morning of the 25th, Arnold was expecting a visit from the Commander-in-Chief on his return from Hartford. Washington was delayed by the examination of some redoubts; but he sent forward his two Aides-de-camp, with whom, and with his own Staff, Arnold sat down to breakfast. They were

* Writings, vol. vii. p. 256.

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still at table when an express arrived bringing the letter from Jameson to Arnold. It was opened and read by Arnold in presence of his guests; and so great was his self-command, that he was enabled to conceal from them the vehement emotions which it caused. He requested the Aides-de-camp to inform General Washington, whenever he came, that he had been unexpectedly called over the river by some sudden business at West Point. He ordered a horse to be got ready; and then leaving the table hastily, went up to his wife's chamber. With the brevity required of one whose very minutes might be numbered, he told her that they must instantly part, perhaps to meet no more, and that his life depended on his reaching the British ranks without detection. Struck with horror, the unhappy lady swooned away. In that state he left her, as indeed he had no other choice; hurried down stairs; sprung upon the horse, which he found saddled at the door; and rode full speed to the river's bank. There he entered a boat, and bid the oarsmen push out to the middle of the stream. Next displaying a white handkerchief, he told them that he was going on board the Vulture with a flag of truce. To the Vulture they rowed accordingly; unmolested, since the white emblem was discerned, by any fire from the American lines. When they reached the English ship, Arnold made himself known to the Captain, and was conveyed by him in perfect safety to New York. Notwithstanding the utter disappointment of all the hopes which he had raised, he

was appointed a Colonel in the British service with the local rank of Major General. He also received a payment of upwards of £6,000, in compensation for the losses which he alleged himself to have sustained. Shortly after his arrival, he published an Address to the Inhabitants of America, and next a Proclamation to the Continental troops, alleging public grounds for his desertion, and exhorting them to follow his example.*

Very shortly after the headlong flight of Arnold, General Washington arrived at his house. He had not yet received the papers, nor formed the slightest suspicion of the plot. On being told that Arnold had been called over to West Point, he decided not to wait, but to follow. He embarked accordingly, attended by all his officers, except Colonel Hamilton, who remained within doors. As the whole party were seated in the barge, moving smoothly, with the majestic scenery of the Highlands round them, Washington said, "Well, Gentlemen, I am glad, on "the whole, that General Arnold has gone before "us; for we shall now have a salute, and the roaring "of the cannon will have a fine effect among the "mountains." Yet, as they drew nearer and nearer to the beach, they heard no sound, they saw no

* The details of André's capture, and of Arnold's escape (as also many of the following), are derived from Mr. Sparks's careful and judicious Life of Arnold (pp. 192—242). He had the advantage of perusing, while in England, Sir Henry Clinton's detailed despatches on the subject, at the State Paper Office. Another narrative by Sir Henry, extracted from his MS. Memoirs, will be found in my Appendix.

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sign, of welcome. "What!" said Washington, "do they not intend to salute us?" Just then an officer was observed wending his way down among the rocks. He met the barge as it touched the shore; and on perceiving the Commander-in-Chief, asked pardon for his seeming neglect, since, as he said, he was taken wholly by surprise. "How is "this, Sir?" inquired Washington, no less astonished, "is not General Arnold here?"—"No, "Sir," replied the officer; "he has not been here "these two days, nor have I heard from him within "that time."—"This is extraordinary," Washington rejoined. "Since, however, we are come, "although unexpectedly, we must look round a "little, and see in what state things are with you." So saying, he proceeded to examine the works.

During the absence of Washington at West Point, there arrived for him, at Arnold's house, the despatch of Colonel Jameson; it was opened by Colonel Hamilton. No sooner, then, did Washington, when his inspection was concluded, return across the river, than he was eagerly drawn aside by Hamilton, and the evidence of Arnold's plot laid before him. The calmness and equanimity of Washington were now, as usual with him in all emergencies, displayed. To no one in his train, except to La Fayette and Knox, did he that day impart the painful news. His only remark was to La Fayette: "Whom can we trust now?" And when dinner was shortly afterwards announced, he said to the other officers, without the smallest

change in his demeanour, "Come, Gentlemen, "since Mrs. Arnold is unwell and the General is "absent, let us sit down without ceremony." CHAP. LXII. 1780.

Arnold, when on board the Vulture, had sent back a flag of truce, with a letter to Washington. In this he asserted that he had "a heart, con- "scious of its rectitude" in the step which he had taken, and for the wife whom he had left, he solicited the General's pity and protection. He declared her, with great feeling, to be "as good "and as innocent as an angel, and incapable of "doing wrong." At this very time, the poor lady was well nigh frantic with distress. Thus in a few sentences written next day, does Colonel Hamilton describe her state: — "She, for a con- "siderable time, entirely lost herself. The Gene- "ral went up to see her, and she upbraided him "with being in a plot to murder her child. One "moment she raved, another she melted into "tears. Sometimes she pressed her infant to her "bosom and lamented its fate, occasioned by "the imprudence of its father, in a manner that "would have pierced insensibility itself. All the "sweetness of beauty, all the loveliness of in- "nocence, all the tenderness of a wife, and all "the fondness of a mother, showed themselves "in her appearance and conduct. We have every "reason to believe that she was entirely unac- "quainted with the plan." It is only just to the Americans to add that — far unlike the Spaniards in some similar cases of late years — they did not,

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even when most flushed with their anger against Arnold, wreak it in any, even the smallest, act of injury or insult to his wife. She was allowed, ere the close of the year, to rejoin her husband at New York, and share his subsequent fortunes.

It was for Major André that their whole resentment was reserved. Soon after his arrest, that young officer had written to Washington, frankly avowing his name and rank. By Washington's orders he was conveyed, in the first instance, to West Point, and next to the head-quarters of the army at Tappan, where his case was forthwith referred to a Court of Inquiry. That Court consisted of fourteen officers, all Americans, except Baron Steuben and the Marquis de La Fayette; their President was General Greene. Having assembled, the prisoner was brought before them and examined; but was not allowed the presence of any advocate, any witness, or any friend. Even under such depressing circumstances, it is owned by American writers, that he maintained throughout a manly, dignified, and respectful deportment, replied to every question promptly, showed no embarrassment, and sought no disguise. His main anxiety appeared to be to avoid endangering the safety, by disclosing the name, or relating the conduct, of any other person but himself. *

Of procrastination, at least, that Court of Inquiry cannot be accused. At the close of their

* Life by Jared Sparks, Esq., p. 261.

first and only meeting, they reported it as their opinion that Major André ought to be considered as a spy, and, according to the law and usage of nations, to suffer death. On the Commander-in-Chief it now depended to confirm or to annul, to execute or to remit, their judgment. André himself received the news with unshaken firmness. At his request, he was permitted to write and send a letter to Sir Henry Clinton. That letter has been published. It expresses, in most affectionate and affecting terms, his gratitude for his General's many acts of kindness. And of himself it adds: "I am perfectly tranquil in mind, and prepared for "any fate to which an honest zeal for my King's "service may have devoted me."

Already, even some days before, Sir Henry, full of solicitude and concern for his young friend, had made an earnest appeal to General Washington for his release. He rested his demand on two grounds: first, that André had gone ashore from the Vulture with a flag of truce sent for him by Arnold; and secondly, that at the time of his arrest, he was under the protection of a pass, which Arnold, while commanding at West Point, had undoubted authority to give. To his letter Clinton added a note from Arnold himself, in corroboration of his statements. Sir Henry received, however, an unfavourable reply from Washington, and at the same time was apprised of the decision to which the Board of Officers had come. He determined to send immediately to the American head-quarters

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a deputation, which might state the true facts of the case and urge his arguments anew. For this service he selected an officer of the highest rank, General Robertson, together with the Lieutenant-Governor and the Chief Justice of New York. They were the bearers, also, of a letter from Arnold to Washington, in which Arnold repeated his explanations, and threatened measures of requital if the sentence against André should be executed; a letter which, as might have been foreseen, produced no good effect, but rather, it may be feared, the reverse.*

On the 1st of October, the three Commissioners sailed up the Hudson, in an English sloop, and with a flag of truce. Of the three, however, Washington allowed only General Robertson to land. Nor was he willing, as was wished, to confer with that officer in person; he appointed to meet him the President of the late Court of Inquiry. The English chief, accordingly, was received on shore by General Greene, and began by stating, at full length, the two points on which Sir Henry Clinton had laid stress. In reply to the first, it was observed by General Greene, that André himself, on his trial, had avowed that, in landing from the Vulture, he did not consider himself under the sanction of a flag of truce. When General Robertson alleged the testimony of Arnold, as to his

* This letter, and most of the others bearing on the case of André, will be found in the Appendix to vol. vii. of Washington's Writings, pp. 520—544.

having sent one out, General Greene answered drily, that the Americans would believe André in preference to Arnold. How far it might be either just or humane (for of generosity in this case we need, of course, say nothing), to turn against André an avowal made, with not a friend or counsel beside him, and in the presence of only his bitterest foes, was not any further in that conference discussed. General Robertson offered to exchange for the intended victim, any prisoner whom the Americans might choose. He urged that, in more than one instance, confessed and undoubted spies, the secret correspondents of Washington from the English quarters, had had their lives spared, from Sir Henry's merciful regard to the intercessions in their behalf, of the American Commander. He observed that several such spies were still in Sir Henry's power. Finding his arguments, his offers, his entreaties, all alike unheeded, General Robertson said, lastly, that no military tribunal in Europe would decide the case of André to be that of a spy; and he proposed to refer the question to the judgment of General Knyphausen and the Comte de Rochambeau. Greene and Robertson then parted, the former promising only to repeat to his Chief all the representations of the latter. Early next morning, the 2nd of October, Robertson received a note from Greene, stating, in few words, that his arguments, as reported, had made no change in General Washington's opinion and determination. Another appeal, which Robertson,

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to leave no possible means untried, addressed in a letter direct to Washington, proved equally barren of effect.

There was one condition, it seems, and one condition only, on which Washington would have readily agreed to André's release — that the English should give up Arnold in his place. It is astonishing (but, indeed, what part of Washington's conduct in this transaction may not excite surprise?) how such a thought should have entered such a mind; how Washington could have expected an honourable enemy to take a step so dishonourable, and so subversive of every military principle. Captain Aaron Ogden, who conveyed the letters from André and from Washington to the British posts as far as Paulus Hook, was directed to let fall this idea among the British officers; it was accordingly made known to Sir Henry Clinton, but by him was, of course and at once, rejected. The same suggestion was brought forward more directly by General Greene, in the conference with General Robertson. In his despatch to Sir Henry, Robertson declares that he replied to it only by a look of indignant rebuke.

Meanwhile, André in his captivity continued serene and self-possessed. He beguiled one of his lonesome and weary hours by making, with his pen, a sketch of himself as he sat at his prison-table.* To death he was resigned; but he solicited the

* This sketch was presented by André to the officer on

privilege of dying by the musket like a soldier, and not by the cord like a felon. On the 1st of October, he addressed to Washington a touching letter with this sad request. Washington, however, so far from relenting, vouchsafed him no reply; and the prisoner was left, to the last, uncertain of his doom. His execution had been fixed for noon on the next day. He was dressed in his uniform as a British officer, and walked forward with the firmness which becomes that character. It was only when he came in sight of the gallows that, by an involuntary impulse, he shrunk back. "Must I then die in "this manner?" he said; but speedily recovering himself, he added, "it will be but a momentary "pang." He ascended the cart with a firm step, and bandaged his own eyes with a steady hand. At the last, when an American officer drew nigh and told him that he had an opportunity to speak if he desired it, he raised the handkerchief from his eyes, and said: — "I pray you to bear me witness "that I meet my fate like a brave man." These were his last words; the signal was made, the noose fell, his limbs were convulsed for a moment, and then still for ever. Thus did the Adjutant-General of the British army in America, die the death of the vilest malefactors; a death, however, which, in his circumstances, and with his character, brought no disgrace — no disgrace, at least, to him.

guard, and is now preserved in the Trumbull Gallery, at Yale College. A *fac-simile* is given by Mr. Sparks, in his Life of Arnold, p. 280.

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A monument to the memory of André — WHO FELL A SACRIFICE TO HIS ZEAL FOR HIS KING AND COUNTRY — was, by command of George the Third, raised in Westminster Abbey. His remains were buried close to the place of execution. But in 1821, they were disinterred and removed to England by Mr. Buchanan the British Consul at New York. * It was not fit, indeed, that they should rest in American ground.

From the historical narrative let us now pass to the critical examination of his fate. First, then, had Washington any good ground for relying on the judgment of the Court of Inquiry? Of whom did that Court consist? As we have already seen, of twelve American, and of two European field-officers. Now, it must be borne in mind that the American Generals, at that time, were, for the most part, wholly destitute of the advantage of a liberal education. They were men drawn from the plough-handle, or from the shop-board, at their country's call. Greene himself, the President of the tribunal, had been a blacksmith by trade. These humble avocations afford no reason why such men might not always do their duty as became them in the field; why they should not sometimes acquire and display military skill; why, at the present day, their names should not be held in high honour by their countrymen. But they do afford a reason, and

* See an account of this disinterment, in the Ann. Register, 1821, part ii. p. 133. A small peach-tree was found growing on the grave.

as it seems to me, a strong one, why such men, having no light of study to guide them, having never probably so much as heard the names of Vattel or Puffendorf, could be no fit judges on any nice or doubtful point of national law. And by whom had they been assisted? By La Fayette, who, though for some years a trans-Atlantic General, was still only a youth of twenty-three, and who, as he tells us, had learnt little or nothing at his college. By Steuben, who had undoubtedly great knowledge and experience, but who speaking no English, while his colleagues spoke no French, was unable to discuss any controverted question with them. *

It follows then, that the verdict of such a tribunal ought to have no weight in such a case; and that Washington, far from relying upon it, was bound either to refer the question to such men as Knyphausen and Rochambeau, adjoining with them perhaps Steuben; or to ponder and decide it for himself. Had he considered it with his usual calmness and clear good sense, it seems scarcely possible that, with all the circumstances so utterly unlike, he should have pronounced the case of André to be the same as that of a common spy. And waiving for the present the disputed point as to the flag of truce, it is clear at all events, that when André was arrested, he was travelling under the protection of a pass which Arnold, as the commander of the West Point district, had a right to

* On this mutual ignorance of each other's language see the note at vol. vi. p. 236.

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give. The Americans contend that this right was forfeited, or rendered of no effect, by Arnold's treacherous designs. Yet how hard to reconcile such a distinction with plighted faith and public law! How can we draw the line and say at what precise point the passes are to grow invalid — whether, when the treachery is in progress of execution, or when only matured in the mind, or when the mind is still wavering upon it? In short, how loose and slippery becomes the ground if once we forsake the settled principle of recognising the safe-conducts granted by adequate authority, if once we stray forth in quest of secret motives and designs!

It has, indeed, been asserted that "Washington "signed the order for André's death with great "reluctance; but the army were dissatisfied, and "demanded the sacrifice." This assertion, however, rests on no sufficient evidence*; and were it most fully established, would not relieve the Commander-in-Chief from his legitimate responsibility. Nor can the inflexibility of Washington, in both

* It was so stated to Mr. W. Faux, on board a steam-boat in the Delaware, by "two old German gentlemen, heroes of the "Revolution," who, as they said, had been in camp with Major André. (April 12. 1820; Memorable Days in America, p. 402.) In their opinion the example of his death was "ne-"cessary and salutary." But the names of these two gentlemen are not given; and there is another part of their statement which I should be loth to admit, without the strongest corroborative testimony, that an American General (who is named) could insult the defenceless André on his way to execution, telling him: — "You die for your cowardice, and like a "coward!" This must surely be quite erroneous.

awarding death to André, and denying him the last consolation and relief he sought — to die the death of a soldier — be vindicated, as I conceive, by any supposed necessity, at that time, of a severe example. Had Arnold, indeed, or any American taking part with Arnold, been in question, that motive might, no doubt, have justly carried considerable weight. But what end could Washington hope to effect by even the utmost extremity of rigour against André? Let another most gallant and accomplished soldier answer for me. "Mr. Washington," says Sir Henry Clinton, in his Memoirs, "could not be insensible that the example, though "ever so terrible and ignominious, would never "deter a British officer from treading in the same "steps, whenever the service of his country should "require his exposing himself to the like danger "in such a war."

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It behoves us, no doubt, to ponder reverently, ere we attempt to cast any censure on a man so virtuous as Washington. Yet none of his warmest panegyrists can assert, though they sometimes imply, that his character was wholly faultless; and here, as it seems to me, we are upon its faulty point. He had, as his friends assure us, by nature strong and most angry passions; these he had curbed and quelled by a resolute exertion of his will, but he did not always prevent them from hardening into sternness. Of this we may observe some indications here and there in his private correspondence, as, for instance, in the case of the suicides at Bos-

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ton. But such indications are confined to words, and addressed only to his familiar friends. Here, on the contrary, the fault appears in action. Here it gave rise to what, unless I greatly deceive myself, the intelligent classes of his countrymen will, ere long, join ours in condemning — the death-warrant of André; certainly by far the greatest, and perhaps the only blot in his most noble career.

CHAPTER LXIII.

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In England, the close of the Session was marked by another attempt to strengthen and enlarge the basis of the Ministry. During the Gordon riots some of the leaders of the Opposition had been thrown into a temporary concert with the leaders of the Government, as combining, with all their strength, against the mob attacks and mob demands. Why, then, might not the undiminished perils of the country at large invite the conflicting statesmen to a more solid and more lasting union? With these views, a month had not elapsed ere Lord North made some overtures to the friends of the Marquis of Rockingham, who sent in some proposals in return. It was found that they had considerably modified their old peremptory tone, as to the acknowledgment, by the mother-country, of her insurgent Colonies. They said, in substance, that they did not see how the troops could now be called from thence; and that, therefore, the dependence of America need not, at present, be

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taken into consideration. They did not desire to exclude Lord North himself, nor yet any of his colleagues, except Sandwich; but they expected that the Government should admit some of the measures which they had lately been supporting; as, the Contractors' Bill, Mr. Crewe's Bill, and great part, at least, of Mr. Burke's.

With these terms, however, as reported by Lord North to the King, His Majesty was far from contented. "The evasive reply about America," he said, "will by no means answer." He raised objections to several of the persons named for office, especially the Duke of Richmond, and he would not consent to any of the Bills desired. In consequence, Lord North found it necessary to let fall the whole negotiation. The King, at a later period, had full leisure to regret his own pertinacity when he found himself compelled, under far more mortifying circumstances, and without any admixture of less unwelcome servants, to accept exactly the same men, and exactly the same measures.*

The Constitutional battle, therefore, recommenced; and, on the 1st of September, a Proclamation was issued to dissolve the Parliament. Near as was the approach to the Septennial period, the Opposition chiefs might compare that Dissolution to a thunder-clap, for its suddenness and surprise†; probably the better to excuse the re-

* The King's secret letter to Lord North, dated July 3. 1780, will be found in the Appendix.

† Ann. Regist. 1781, p. 141.

verses which it brought to them. Some triumphs, of course, they had. Mr. Fox, after many days' polling against Lord Lincoln, was proclaimed Member for Westminster; his colleague was Admiral Rodney. Admiral Keppel, after being flung out by the Castle influence from the borough of Windsor, was returned for the county of Surrey by the public spirit of the freeholders. But, upon the whole, the Elections went greatly in favour of the Court. Burke, above all, lost his seat at Bristol. On arriving in that city, he found the people much prepossessed against him, mainly on two grounds: first, his strenuous exertions in freeing the Roman Catholics of England from the intolerable weight of the Penal Code; and secondly, his support of the trade of Ireland, notwithstanding some instructions to the contrary from his own constituents. On both these points, as well as on some others, he delivered from the hustings a speech which is still preserved, and which may deserve to rank among the highest efforts of his eloquence. But, as the readers of by-gone controversies will often, very often, find to be the case, the same arguments which at present appear to us entirely unanswerable, produced no impression at the time. After some days of unsuccessful canvass, Burke deemed it best, by the advice of his friends, to retire from the contest, even without demanding a poll. He announced his retirement in another speech, much briefer than the former, but marked, in the highest degree, by good temper and good taste; and, adverting to the

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fate of Mr. Coombe, another of the candidates, who, in the midst of hopes as eager and exertions as laborious, had been struck down by sudden death, he bade both his hearers and himself take to heart that awful lesson—"what shadows we are, and "what shadows we pursue!" The voice of the great philosopher and statesman was, however, not lost to the House of Commons. Happily for England, the borough of Malton, which he had once already represented, now, at the bidding of Lord Rockingham, spread forth its hospitable arms to receive him.*

A writer in the Annual Register for the ensuing year—perhaps Mr. Burke himself, probably, at all events, a disappointed candidate—charges the Elections of this period both with listlessness and with venality. But in some places at least, the fact was the very reverse. Thus, in Yorkshire, there arose an independent and public-spirited Association to conduct the contests. "Hitherto," said Sir George Savile, "hitherto I have been "elected in Lord Rockingham's dining-room, now "I am returned by my constituents!"†

Two members of old Roman Catholic families became candidates at this General Election—

* Some picturesque details of a Malton election, as it was in 1831, are given by Lord Jeffrey. It appears to have been conducted with a due regard to the great value of time. "In "three hours and a half," he says, "I actually called at 635 "doors, and shook 494 men by the hand!" (See the Memoirs, by Lord Cockburn, vol. ii. p. 234.)

† Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. i. p. 57.

Charles, Earl of Surrey, eldest son of the Duke of Norfolk, and Sir Thomas Gascoigne. By a fortunate coincidence, the perception of the errors of Popery appears to have dawned upon their minds simultaneously with the wish to sit in Parliament, which, as Roman Catholics, they could not do. It is likewise remarkable, that they should have publicly abjured their former faith at the very time most likely to produce a popular and striking effect. On Sunday, the 4th of June, in the midst of the Gordon riots, they read their recantation before the Archbishop of Canterbury, and received the Sacrament from His Grace's hands.* In the subsequent Elections, both the new converts throve well: Lord Surrey was returned for Carlisle, and Sir Thomas for Thirsk.

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The new Members elected to this Parliament numbered 113; several of high promise and of coming fame. From Stafford came Richard Brinsley Sheridan, full of eloquence and genius, and flushed with the success of his excellent compositions on the stage. From Hull came William Wilberforce; a proud name to after times, in itself sufficient to prove that office and party are not the sole conditions of Parliamentary renown.† But

* Ann. Regist. 1780, p. 215.

† "After a successful canvass at Hull, Mr. Wilberforce repaired to London, where about three hundred Hull freemen resided in the vicinity of the river; these he entertained at suppers in the different public-houses of Wapping. . . . This election cost him between 8,000*l.* and 9,000*l.*" (Life, by his Sons, vol. i. p. 14.)

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besides such great accessions, there were other new Members, of far less fame indeed, yet still of some. Newport, in Cornwall, sent Lord Maitland, better known as Earl of Lauderdale; a man of great shrewdness and practical ability; at one time the detractor, at another the pupil, of Burke. Corfe Castle sent Henry Bankes; a model to any one who would be an independent country gentleman, a warning to any one who would be an historian of Rome. Lord Mahon became Member for High Wycombe, on the recommendation of Lord Shelburne. Robert Smith, afterwards Lord Carrington, began, as Member for Nottingham, a Parliamentary career of fifty-eight years; a career of no oratorical pretensions, but in a high degree conscientious, upright, and benevolent, such as well became the kinsman of Wilberforce, and the friend of Pitt.

Pitt himself, was not, in the first instance, returned to the new Parliament. He had felt a natural ambition to represent the University of Cambridge; and so high did his character stand there, that, though barely twenty-one years of age, he could contest it with fair prospects of success. He had applied to Lord Rockingham for his countenance and support; but his Lordship civilly declined it; "from the knowledge I have," he said, "of several persons who may be candidates"* —persons, no doubt, of the right family connections, some nephews or some cousins of the

* See Mr. Pitt's letter, and Lord Rockingham's reply, in the Memoirs by Lord Albemarle, vol. ii. pp. 422, 423.

great Whig Houses. Pitt was for the time defeated. But only a few months afterwards, the accident of a double Return afforded him another entrance into Parliament. He was chosen for Appleby, at that time a close borough, under the control of Sir James Lowther. It appears from Pitt's private letters that the influence which wrought with Sir James on this occasion, was that of Pitt's contemporary and constant friend, the young Duke of Rutland, a son of the gallant Granby.

Buckinghamshire—where the Earldom and estates of Temple had not long since descended to George Grenville, the eldest son of the late Prime Minister—sent, as one of its representatives, his second son, Thomas Grenville. Never did the character of two brothers stand forth in bolder contrast to each other. George, second Earl Temple, and subsequently first Marquis of Buckingham, steeped, as his own letters show him, in selfishness and pride,—Thomas Grenville, a man of the kindest heart, of the gentlest and most graceful manners, of the most public-spirited intentions. In diplomacy he manifested considerable aptitude, and his abilities for public speaking, though seldom exerted, were not small. The Duke of Wellington has told me, that a speech which he heard Mr. Thomas Grenville deliver in 1807, as First Lord of the Admiralty during a few months, and in moving the Navy Estimates, was among the best and clearest statements he remembered. Thus, for high political eminence,

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he wanted only larger opportunities, and, perhaps, a more stirring spirit of ambition. His books — now the pride of the Museum, through his own munificent bequest — were his refuge and delight, yet not so as ever to abstract him from his friends. Born in 1755, and surviving in the fullest possession of his faculties till 1846, he formed, as it were, a link between the present and a long past age. With the same clear intelligence that had beheld the dying flashes of Lord Chatham's eloquence, or the last gleams of Lord North's wit — that had scanned with care, from day to day, the busy scenes of party contention which ensued — would he turn to counsel Mr. Gladstone, and other statesmen of rising fame, half a century removed from the former; nor can any one, even of far subordinate importance, who was admitted to the high privilege of sharing his familiar hours, forget that calm and benignant countenance, that voice of cordial welcome, or those stores of political wisdom so cheerfully supplied.

Such are far, very far, from being the impressions of only a single friend. Thus writes one of Mr. Grenville's most attached and constant associates, the Earl of Ellesmere, in a short, but eloquent and feeling Memoir, which has hitherto, to the regret of many, remained in manuscript: —

"If Providence should give me the same long "tenure of unimpaired faculties as was the lot of "him I mourn, the recollection of my intercourse "with that wise and good man will be my endur-

"ing and best companion to the verge of that "great change which I hope and pray—with all "the hesitation which springs from a sense of "unworthiness—may effect a restoration of that "intercourse."

On the last day in October the House of Commons met to choose a Speaker. Lord George Germaine, on the part of the Government, expressed his regret that the late Speaker, Sir Fletcher Norton, had been so often disabled by illness during the last Session, and concluded by proposing in his place Mr. Charles Wolfran Cornwall, Member for Winchelsea. On this occasion Sir Fletcher spoke himself, and with characteristic acrimony. He could not deny his frequent illnesses, and the consequent interruptions to public business, but he asserted that the Ministers had no motive in supplanting him besides the political offence which on various questions he had given them; above all by his memorable address to the King.* The Opposition espoused his cause, but, on a division, Mr. Cornwall was elected, by 203 against 134.

Next day, the 1st of November, the Session was opened by the King. His Majesty's Speech from the Throne complained of the unprovoked aggres-

* See vol. vi. p. 211. The new Speaker, Mr. Cornwall, a lawyer by profession, had been a Lord of the Treasury since 1774. On the first offer transmitted to him, Chatham wrote to Shelburne:—"If he accepts, Government makes a very valuable "and accredited instrument of real business. His character is "respectable, and his manners and life amiable."—(Chatham's Papers, vol. iv. p. 333.)

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sion of the monarchies of France and Spain, but referred with pleasure to the progress of his arms in the provinces of Georgia and Carolina. Amendments to the Address were moved in both Houses; in the Lords by the Marquis of Carmarthen; in the Commons by Mr. Thomas Grenville; but in both rejected; in the one case by 68 against 23; in the other by 212 against 130. These signal defeats appear to have damped the spirits of the Opposition, at least until the Christmas Recess; and, large as were the Estimates, Lord North was enabled to carry them through with a high hand. For the navy, including the marines, the House of Commons voted 90,000 men; for the army, besides the invalids at home, and besides, also, the hired Brunswickers and Hessians in America, 35,000; while the whole Supplies granted for the year 1781 exceeded the sum of 25,000,000*l.* Before the Session ended, several new Duties, as on paper and on almanacks, were imposed; but nevertheless, our National Debt steadily continued to grow.

At this period, amidst many causes for depression, the Ministers of England might exult at seeing how slight was the progress made against us by the alliance of the Northern Powers. Catherine the Second herself, in speaking to Sir James Harris, called her "Armed Neutrality" an "Armed Nullity;" and Prince Potemkin, as the friend of Harris, said to him: "Content yourself with de-"stroying its effects; the resolution itself is im-"movable. As it was conceived in mistake, and

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"perfected by vanity, so it is maintained by pride "and stubbornness. You well know the hold of "these passions on a female mind, and if you at- "tempt to loose you will only tighten the knot."* The Czarina, it appears, while upholding her new system in words, still cherished some feeling of friendship to the English, and was reluctant to carry matters to extremity against them. Even some months afterwards, when the Armed Neutrality had been joined by other Powers, as by the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Germany, it proved barren of results, and little more than an imposing name.

Another motive for some private rejoicing might be found in the apparent anxiety of France for peace. In December of this year M. Necker, as the leading Minister at Paris, addressed a secret letter to Lord North, as the leading Minister in London; it was headed POUR VOUS SEUL, MY LORD, and it expressed, in strong terms, a wish to treat. The basis which it proposed for the negotiation was a truce, as might be stipulated of greater or of less extent, during which the Belligerent parties in America should each remain in possession of the territories which each already held. But when these conditions were submitted to George the Third, they seemed to His Majesty

* Sir James Harris to Lord Stormont, December 24. 1780. (Malmesbury Papers, vol. i. p. 351.) For the King of Prussia's share in these transactions see especially the *Leben's Geschichte* of Preuss, vol. iv. pp. 119—131.

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altogether inadmissible. "Independency of the "Colonies," he said, "whether under its apparent "name or a truce, is the same in reality." Thus was M. Necker's overture declined.*

But though the French Ministers might sincerely sue for peace, the French nation—as customary with that martial race—were well pleased at the progress of war. The officers coming on leave from America, or known to be zealous for her interests, such as La Fayette, were warmly welcomed. Franklin was, on all sides, much courted and caressed at Paris, and great entertainments in the seaport towns were given to Paul Jones whenever he sailed in with his English prizes.†

Unhappily, at this same period, Holland, our old ally, was added to the ranks of our open enemies. It so chanced that early in September the Vestal frigate, commanded by Captain Keppel, and cruising on the banks of Newfoundland, took one of the American packets. Among the passengers was Mr. Henry Laurens, lately President of Congress, and then bound on a diplomatic mission to the Hague. The packet containing his papers had

* M. Necker's secret letter, dated December 1. 1780, and the King's thereupon to Lord North, on the 18th of the same month — both derived from the North Papers — will be found in the Appendix to this volume.

† Some of the compliments paid to Paul Jones were, it must be owned, sufficiently strange. Thus, at Nantes, one of the speakers at the entertainment compared him, by way of praise, to a coquette, "who enchains those who dare attack her, with-"out being captured herself!" (Letter from Nantes in the *London Courant*, July 14. 1780.)

been thrown overboard, but its bulk keeping it afloat for a short time, it was saved by the boldness and skill of a British seaman. On arriving in London, Mr. Laurens was brought before the assembled Ministers of State, and, on refusing to answer their interrogatories, was committed a close prisoner to the Tower. Little other information was obtained from him beyond the avowal of his name. But this defect was amply supplied by the examination of his papers. Among them was found the plan of a treaty of alliance between the United States of America and the United States of Holland. It was dated so far back as September, 1778, before we could have given any plea for quarrel to the Dutch, and it had been signed by the express orders of Van Berkel, the Pensionary, and other chief magistrates of Amsterdam. The States General, indeed, had not yet ratified it, and there had been some disagreement on some of its details; but to these Mr. Laurens, in his mission, was empowered to put a finishing hand.

Holland, at this period, was divided by two great parties: the party of the Stadtholder, the Prince of Orange, and the party inclining to France, of which the Pensionary, Van Berkel, was among the principal members. It was this party which had, for some time past, gained the upper hand; it was this which had been so industrious to inflame the disputes with England; it was this which was now upon the point of adding the Republic to the alliance of the Armed Neutrality. Under such

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1780. circumstances, and as dealing with determined enemies, the Ministers, in England, deemed it the truest policy to maintain the firmest tone. Sir Joseph Yorke, still our ambassador at the Hague, was instructed to press the matter in repeated memorials. He required that the States General should immediately disavow the conduct of the States of Holland. Further, he insisted upon the punishment of Van Berkel, and his accomplices, as disturbers of the public peace, and violators of the rights of nations. Had the Stadtholder been a man of energy, he might perhaps, on this occasion, have wrested from his opponents the reins of power. As it was, the French party, continuing supreme, and returning none but evasive answers to England, Sir Joseph was recalled, and Count Welderen dismissed; and, on the 20th of December, a Declaration of War, in the King's name, was issued against the Dutch.

1781. The Parliament, at this time, had already adjourned. When it met again in the January following, a Royal Message, to announce the war, was delivered to both Houses. The Opposition, deeming the opportunity favourable, raised an angry cry. They complained that the language of Sir Joseph Yorke, in his former Memorials, had been harsh and overbearing. They alleged that the paper seized with Mr. Laurens was no more than the draft, or project, of a treaty. Two amendments to the Address of Thanks were moved in the House of Commons; the one by Lord John

Cavendish, the other by Lord Mahon, but they were both rejected; nor did any better success attend the Duke of Richmond in the House of Lords. CHAP. LXIII. 1781.

Early in February, this year, there came on before Lord Mansfield, as Chief Justice, and on a charge of High Treason, the trial of Lord George Gordon. The public mind had certainly much cooled since the numerous convictions in July, 1780, and the Noble prisoner was no doubt far less criminal than silly. Still, however, it was highly fortunate for him that his defence depended on that most able advocate whose just fame will be ever blended with the records of this cause.

Thomas Erskine was born at Edinburgh, in 1750. He was the youngest son of the Earl of Buchan; a nobleman of most ancient lineage, but, at that time, of most slender fortune. Though brought up at the High School, we find the great forensic orator that was to be still at twelve years old ignorant of grammar; as one line of his letters may show: "In the time of the vacation Harry and "me writes themes."* Two years later he went to sea, as a midshipman, and sailed for the West Indies. Disgusted at the want of advancement, he left that profession at eighteen, and expended his whole patrimony in the purchase of an Ensign's Commission. Nor did he mend his fortunes by his

* Letter, August 11. 1762, as published by Lord Campbell. The family of Erskine had just then removed for cheapness to St. Andrew's.

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marriage as a stripling of twenty; his bride being a young lady of great merit, but no money. Next he was sent abroad on service, to join the garrison of Minorca, where he remained two years. One of his duties at Port Mahon, during the Chaplain's illness and furlough, was to read prayers, and preach on Sundays to his men; thus, in after life, he was fond of saying, that he had been by turns a sailor and a soldier, a parson and a lawyer!

On his return from Minorca, Erskine was appointed a Lieutenant, and also published an Essay on the abuses of the army. Perhaps he may have thought (for he was still a very young man) that such a pamphlet would tend to his promotion. But he had no money to purchase higher commissions, and grew weary of his lounging life in country quarters. At this period, his accidental presence at a trial, and some attentions from Lord Mansfield, the presiding Judge, decided his future fate. He resolved to quit the army, and embrace the profession of the law. Selling his commission, and taking rooms in Trinity College, Cambridge, he contrived at the same time to keep his terms at Lincoln's Inn. All this while he was enduring great privations from his narrow means and increasing family. "I used, then," he said, "to "live on tripe and cow-heel."

Erskine was called to the Bar in 1778. At first he saw but little prospect of business. It was the accident of his having been bred to the navy that obtained for him a one guinea retainer in the great

cause of Captain Thomas Baillie. That officer, a deserving veteran, was Lieutenant-Governor of Greenwich Hospital, and, as such, observed and desired to correct some recent abuses in its management. He complained especially, and with good reason, of Lord Sandwich, for the great number of landsmen whom he had placed in the Hospital, as rewards for their Electioneering services. Captain Baillie had presented successive petitions to various persons in authority, praying for inquiry and redress. Finding these unheeded, he printed and circulated, certainly in no mild terms, a statement of the case. For this offence he was immediately suspended from his office by the Board of Admiralty, and the First Lord, himself hanging back, incited the inferior officers at Greenwich, who were likewise glanced at, to file a criminal information against the author for a libel. When, in November, 1778, the cause came on for trial before the Judges, Erskine, as Counsel for the Captain, found, to his dismay, four other Counsel on the same side, all senior to himself. As it chanced, however, the other four took up the whole of the first day, and enabled Erskine, under favourable circumstances, to begin the next. Then it was that, from the back row, a young gentleman, unknown as yet in face or name, was seen to rise, and in a modest yet firm tone delivered a powerful address. He had already reached his conclusion, which he intended to wind up with one or two remarks upon Lord Sandwich. "Indeed," he

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said, "Lord Sandwich has, in my mind, acted such "a part ——." Here, in the words of the Report, Lord Mansfield, observing the Counsel heated with his subject, and growing personal on the First Lord of the Admiralty, told him that Lord Sandwich was not before the Court. Undismayed, unfaltering, Erskine burst forth with this rejoinder: "I know "that he is not formally before the Court, but for "that very reason I will bring him before the "Court. He has placed these men in the front of "the battle, in hopes to escape under their shelter, "but I will not join in battle with them; their "vices, though screwed up to the highest pitch of "human depravity, are not of dignity enough to "vindicate the combat with ME. I will drag HIM "to light who is the dark mover behind this scene "of iniquity. . . . If he continues to protect the "prosecutors, in spite of the evidence of their "guilt, which has excited the abhorrence of the "numerous audience who crowd this Court,—if he "keeps this innocent man suspended, or dares to "turn that suspension into a removal,—I shall then "not scruple to declare him an accomplice in their "guilt, a shameless oppressor, a disgrace to his "rank, and a traitor to his trust!"

In a similar strain of empassioned eloquence he went on to exclaim: "Fine and imprisonment! "The man deserves a palace, instead of a prison, "who prevents the palace built by the public "bounty of his country from being converted into "a dungeon, and who sacrifices his own security to

"the interests of humanity and virtue." Finally, their Lordships discharged the Rule with costs; and the young advocate, having thus prevailed, walked back through the Hall amidst a roar of congratulation and applause. A very competent judge (in both senses of the word) declares that, all the circumstances considered, this was the most wonderful forensic effort of which we have any account in our annals.* When Erskine was afterwards asked how he had the courage to stand up so boldly against Lord Mansfield, of whom all the other Counsel were in awe, he answered, that he thought his little children were plucking his robe, and that he heard them saying, "Now, father, is the time "to get us bread."

From that day, though still only by degrees, the tide of business flowed in upon Erskine; and his politics inclining to the side of Opposition, it was from them that his briefs were most commonly derived. In 1779, he was one of Admiral Keppel's Counsel at the memorable Court Martial held at Portsmouth for thirty-two days.† Here, again, Erskine's knowledge of naval phrases and naval affairs was of signal service both to his client and himself. At the close, succeeding to his wishes, the generous Admiral sent him a munificent gift

* Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 396. See also a note to the State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 31. In 1779 the case of Captain Baillie led to some further proceedings in the House of Lords.

† See vol. vi. of this History, p. 390.

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of 1,000*l.* In great glee, Erskine hastened to a family near London, with whom he lived on familiar terms, and showing them his wealth, exclaimed, "Voila! the nonsuit of cow-beef, my good "friends!"

At the trial of Lord George Gordon, in February, 1781, Erskine, as Counsel for his Lordship, found himself junior to Lloyd Kenyon. This was a worthy man, and excellent lawyer, deservedly raised both to the Bench and to the Peerage. But he was wholly destitute of eloquence, and in opening Lord George's defence, delivered a most ineffective speech. Under these circumstances, Erskine, contrary to the common rule, obtained permission to defer his own address until after the evidence for the prisoner had been closed. He rose soon after midnight, and quickly dispelled all feeling of weariness from all those who heard him, as he, with consummate skill, combined some passionate bursts of glowing oratory with a chain of the closest argument. Then, for the first and only time in our legal annals, did an advocate, addressing a Court of Justice, presume to use an oath. Erskine had been alleging whatever proofs the case could afford of his client's good and peaceful intentions; and when he had related how, in the midst of the disturbances, Lord George had gone to Buckingham House, and asked to see the King, and how he had told the Secretary of State, Lord Stormont, whom, alone, he succeeded in seeing, that he would do his best to quell the

riots; on completing this recapitulation, Erskine thus broke forth:—"I say, BY GOD, that man is a "ruffian who shall, after this, presume to build "upon such honest, artless conduct as an evidence "of guilt." So well did the voice, the eye, the face, assist these words—so happily did the words chime in with the high-wrought feelings of the hearers—that instead of being shrunk from as profane, or rebuked as indecorous, they seemed rather to impart a tone of religious exaltation; and thus was the daring experiment crowned with complete success.*

Erskine having ended, and the Solicitor-General replied, the case was summed up by Lord Mansfield in remarks by no means favourable to the prisoner. The Jury withdrew for half an hour, but at a quarter past five in the morning brought back to the thronged and anxious Court their verdict of NOT GUILTY. There were still, in Scotland at least, some partisans left to Lord George, to rejoice at his acquittal, and subscribe nearly 500*l.* towards his expenses. But the joy extended further. It was felt on constitutional grounds by many who had not the slightest political leaning to the silly young fanatic. "I am glad," said Dr. Johnson, "Lord George Gordon has escaped,

* See the remarks in the Edinburgh Review, No. xxxi. p. 108. and Lord Campbell's Chancellors, vol. vi. p. 410. Lord Stormont had been *subpœna'd*, and had appeared as a witness, to give, in Lord George's defence, an account of his call at Buckingham House on Wednesday, the 7th of June. (State Trials, vol. xxi. p. 571.)

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"rather than a precedent should be established of "hanging a man for constructive treason."*

From this time forward, and for many years, the career of Erskine at the Bar was one of transcendent genius and success. Spontaneous as his gift of eloquence might seem, he had not neglected (how few great orators have!) early studies for its cultivation. The two years during which he had been shut up in Minorca were, it soon appeared, the most improving of his life. There he had carefully embued himself with the principal classic writers of the English language. Dryden and Pope he had there, in some measure, learnt by heart. But his principal favourites, as we are told, were Shakspeare and Milton; and above all, as we may presume, the noble speeches in both. His knowledge was indeed confined, or nearly so, to his native tongue; but within that range he had ever at command some apt passage to recite, and had formed for himself, with especial care, a pure and idiomatic diction. By such means he had gradually unfolded and matured that rare gift of eloquence, which, as one of its greatest masters so finely says in its praise, can never be simulated, though philosophy may.† The main character of his forensic style was a most vehement earnestness in striving to persuade; an earnestness es-

* Boswell's Life of Johnson, under the date of April 6. 1785.

† Quintilian, Instit. lib. xii. c. 3. "You have read Quin-"tilian," says Lord Chesterfield to his son; "the best book in "the world to form an orator; pray read *Cicero de Oratore*, the "best book in the world to finish one." (November 24. 1749.)

pousing, in all its points, the position of his client, and bearing down every thing before it. All those who heard him at the Bar, concur in saying, that his fervid eloquence was in no small degree assisted by his expressive features, and, above all, by his speaking eye. "Juries have declared," says Lord Brougham, "that they felt it impossible to remove "their looks from him, when he had riveted, and "as it were fascinated, them by his first glance." In another branch of his duty as an advocate, namely, in the examination of witnesses, his skill was likewise celebrated, and formed one more element of his merited success. Never did his fame at the Bar rise higher than during the State Trials of 1790, when, by his genius and exertions, he obtained verdicts of acquittal in the teeth of a strong Government, and rescued, as his partisans believed, the public liberties from danger. As he left the Courts on the last night the exulting populace took the horses from his carriage, and, amidst bonfires and acclamations, drew him home. Twenty years afterwards, "an Elector of West- "minster," one of those who had been harnessed to his wheels, thus in a public letter addressed him: "My Lord, you should have died when you "descended from the triumph of that memorable "day. The timely end, which is the sole pro- "tection against the reverses of fortune, would "have preserved you from that more lamentable "change which could have been occasioned only "by yourself." Bitter words — the more bitter

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because true. Alas! for what scenes of failure and of folly was that great career prolonged! until, as their consummation, and even beyond the date of this reproof, we find Erskine steal down, a septuagenary lover, to Gretna Green; there, to contract—his face concealed in a woman's bonnet, and unattended by a single friend—an ignominious marriage.

The genius of Erskine at the Bar is, indeed, the more remarkable, since that was its only sphere. In every other study or endeavour of his life we find nothing but unsuccessful exertion. He failed as a speaker in the House of Commons. He failed as a speaker in the House of Lords. He failed as Chancellor in the able administration of the law. He failed in the prudent care of his private property. He failed as a poet; he failed as a prose writer; he failed as a pleasant member of the social circle. The reason seems to be, that an advocate pleading at the Bar must perforce speak mainly of his client and cause. In any other sphere of action it is possible for him to speak mainly of himself. And the principal fault at every period of Erskine's mind was a most craving and ravenous vanity. This soon became his by-word, not only among his enemies but among his friends. Counsellor ego grew to be his common nickname. Once we find an apology in a newspaper for breaking off the report of one of his speeches at a public dinner, because, as they said, unhappily their stock of capital I's was quite exhausted. On another

occasion, in 1812, when on a visit at Lord Jersey's seat of Middleton, we find him described as follows by Lord Byron, who was another of the guests: "Erskine, too! Erskine was there, good, but in-"tolerable. . . . He would read his own verses, his "own paragraphs, and tell his own stories again "and again; and then the Trial by Jury! I almost " wished it abolished, for I sat next him at dinner; " and as I had read his public speeches, there was " no occasion to repeat them to me."

The Session of Parliament, which had commenced on the 1st of November, 1780, continued —at that period of our annals a most unusual protraction—till the 18th of July, 1781. Within that time the Opposition took great pains, but made no progress. Burke brought in, for the second time, his measure of Economical Reform, which, after long debate, was thrown out upon the Second Reading. The Bills for excluding contractors and revenue officers from the House of Commons were again introduced, by Sir Philip Jennings Clerke and by Mr. Crewe, but were again rejected. The same fate was shared by two motions tending to peace with America; the mover of the first being Hartley, and the mover of the second, Fox. Great complaints were also made of the terms upon which the loan for the year, amounting to 12,000,000*l.*, had been granted. A rise in the new stock, to the amount of 10 per cent., was held forth as an irre-

* MS "Paper-book" by Lord Byron, begun at Ravenna in 1821, and now in the possession of John Murray, Esq.

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fragable proof of corruption in the Minister. The principal motions on this subject came from Fox and Sir George Savile, the former bringing to it the utmost ingenuity and powers of language, and the latter all the weight of his unsuspected independence; but neither with the least success, so far as numbers were concerned.

Another subject which was much discussed in this Session arose from the public meetings and petitions in the last. Committees had been formed in several counties to promote measures of Reform, and they now associated to send delegates to London. By a stroke of policy in the framers of the scheme, some men already in Parliament, as Fox, Fitzpatrick, Lord Mahon, were placed in the list of delegates and combined with others wholly new to public life. In some cases at least these gentlemen appear to have represented the ardour of a few rather than the inclination of the many. It was publicly stated in the House of Commons, by Sir Francis Basset, member for Barnstaple, that at the meeting in Devonshire to appoint the delegates, there were not above twenty persons present, although the county contained 13,000 freeholders!* Allow even 200 instead of twenty, and how vast a disproportion remains! The political weight of such men as Fox was of course not altered by their imaginary

* Debate of May 8. 1781. (Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. p. 157.) This statement, which, to its full extent, does indeed appear incredible, was contradicted the same evening by Sir George Yonge, himself a delegate.

delegation; but of the more common class, when they met in London, we may readily conceive the bustling self-importance. Who in this city has not seen some provincial orator and oracle, come up for the first time to Parliament, swelling and heaving with the consciousness of his Town-hall triumphs—full of surprise that the Prime Minister has not yet asked to be presented to him — and looking round with an angry scowl when he fails to find at his approach the other Members reverentially make way? — The delegates of 1781 lost no time in graciously assuring Mr. Burke of their especial good opinion, and in taking his measure of Economical Reform under their peculiar care. That measure being rejected by the House of Commons, thirty-two of the delegates (not all, since some judged the step to exceed their proper powers) sent up a petition of their own, claiming redress of grievances. Sir George Savile, as member for the chief of the associated counties, spoke in their behalf, and moved that their petition should be considered in Committee — a motion which the Government successfully opposed. The debate on this occasion turned in no small degree on the unconstitutional character of these pretended representatives. Certain it is that there have been periods in our annals when the continued abode in London of men claiming the name and authority of provincial delegates, might have been fraught with inconvenience at least, if not with danger; and it is well, therefore, that at such times a preventive has been applied,

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and a weight thrown into the opposite scale, by the salutary heaviness of the tavern bills.

In this Session both Sheridan and Pitt spoke several times. The first attempt of Sheridan was upon his own election, which was controverted. He was heard with attention, but was thought to have failed, and when he afterwards went up with much anxiety to his friend, Mr. Woodfall, the printer, who was sitting in the gallery, and asked his opinion, Woodfall replied, with honest frankness: —"I am sorry to say that I do not think that this "is your line." Sheridan rested his head upon his hand for a few minutes, and then vehemently cried: "It is in me, however, and"—here he added an oath—"it shall come out!"* And so it proved. Before the Session closed he had not only retrieved his reputation, but exalted it, and given good earnest of his future fame.

Pitt's first speech was in support of Burke's measure of Economical Reform. With a voice clear and sonorous, with a manner removed alike from bashfulness and from presumption, with an ever-ready flow of well-selected words, he astonished the House, by displaying, at his outset, all the ease, and all the excellences of a practised orator. It was felt at once, with a reverent remembrance of his father, that in him that father's genius was renewed. All the chief men upon the Opposition side—none more conspicuously than Fox—

* Life of Sheridan by Moore, vol. i. p. 348.

were warm in their congratulations.* Pitt addressed the House a second time, and with great success, upon the Bill for continuing the Commission of Public Accounts. But his third was his principal speech this Session. It was in favour of Fox's motion for a Committee on the American War. Pitt being here called up by some misrepresentation of his father's sentiments, took the occasion, after vindicating them, to declare his own. "For my "part," he said, "I am persuaded and will affirm "that it is a most accursed, wicked, barbarous, "cruel, unnatural, unjust, and diabolical war. It "was conceived in injustice; it was nurtured and "brought forth in folly; its footsteps were marked "with blood, slaughter, persecution, devastation!" It is remarkable that when Pitt had concluded in this strain of empassioned eloquence, he was answered by Henry Dundas, then Lord Advocate, in after years the closest of his friends. It is also remarkable to what a pitch, even previous to this last and chief of his efforts in this Session, the renown of the young statesman had already risen. Some days before Fox's motion, we find Mr. Wilberforce write as follows to one of his Yorkshire correspondents:—"The papers will have informed "you how Mr. William Pitt, second son of the late "Lord Chatham, has distinguished himself; he "comes out as his father did, a ready-made orator; "and I doubt not but that I shall one day or other

* A traditional story on this subject is preserved by Lord John Russell in his Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 262.

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"see him the first man in the country. His "famous speech, however, delivered the other "night (on the Public Accounts) did not convince "me, and I staid in with the old fat fellow (Lord "North): by the way, he grows every day fatter."*

While Pitt was thus rising into fame, Fox, in some measure, lost ground; not, indeed, by any eclipse of his splendid talents, but by the continued irregularities of his private life. Some of these are described by Horace Walpole, now well stricken in years, yet lively as ever in his strain:—"I had "been to see if Lady Ailesbury was come to town. "As I came up St. James's Street, I saw a cart and "porters at Charles's door—coppers and old chests "of drawers loading. In short, his success at Faro "has awakened his host of creditors . . . . . and "one of them has actually seized and carried off "his goods, which did not seem worth removing. "As I returned, full of this scene, whom should "I find sauntering by my own door but Charles? "He came up, and talked to me at the coach "window on the Marriage Bill with as much SANG-"FROID as if he knew nothing of what had hap-"pened. . . . . The more marvellous Fox's "parts are, the more one is provoked at his follies, "which comfort so many rascals and blockheads."†

The military operations of the year commenced within the first days of January by a second

* Letter to B. Thompson, Esq., of Hull, June 9. 1781, published in Wilberforce's Life, by his Sons.

† Letter to Conway, May 31. 1781.

descent of the French upon the island of Jersey. Their force was of 800 men: their chief, the Baron de Rullecourt. Major Corbet, the Lieutenant-Governor, upon the English side, was taken prisoner; and agreed, as such, though without valid powers, to sign a capitulation; for which shameful conduct he was afterwards brought to trial, and cashiered. Happily, Major Pierson, on whom the command devolved, a young officer of only five and twenty, was of other mould. He rallied the troops; he attacked the invaders, who had seized the town, and were concentered in the market-place; he slew many, and compelled the rest to surrender. The French chief was mortally wounded; and Pierson also, to the great grief of the islanders, fell dead at the moment of victory by nearly the last shot that the enemy fired.

In the course of April, Admiral Darby, at the head of the grand fleet, afforded succour to the garrison of Gibraltar, once more reduced to dire extremity by the long-continued siege. Having landed his stores, in spite of every opposition from the Spanish batteries and gun-boats, he sailed back to the Channel, while the besiegers resumed their operations with even greater ardour than before. But, besides this attack of the rock-fortress — the Mountain and the Key, as its emblem declares it — the French and Spaniards had another cherished object in view. Towards midsummer, the Brest fleet, sailing to the Mediterranean, and joined by a squadron from Cadiz, conveyed, beyond the

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Streights, a well concerted expedition to invade the island of Minorca. The troops of both nations were upwards of 12,000 men; at their head the French Duke de Crillon. The disembarkation, and the entrance into the town of Port Mahon, were effected without difficulty. On our part, to maintain St. Philip's Castle, there were only two English, and as many Hanoverian, regiments, all much reduced by sickness; but our chief was the late Governor of Quebec, Lieutenant General James Murray, a veteran of tried spirit and ability. Next under him was serving the old antagonist of Junius, Sir William Draper, whose sword was sharper than his pen.

By the orders of the Court of Madrid, and to avoid the labours and losses of a siege, De Crillon wrote, secretly, to the English Governor, offering him, as the price of his surrender, a present of 100,000*l.* and a commission in either the French or Spanish service. The reply of Murray breathes the spirit of honest indignation, and would have been better still, had he forborne from bragging of his own, Lord Elibank's, high race. Here are his expressions: "When your brave ancestor was de-"sired, by his Sovereign, to assassinate the Duke "of Guise, he returned the answer which you "should have done when the King of Spain charged "you to assassinate the character of a man whose "birth is as illustrious as your own, or that of the "Duke of Guise. I can have no other communi-"cation with you but in arms. If you have any

"humanity, pray send clothing to your unfortunate "prisoners in my possession; leave it at a distance "to be taken up for them; because I will admit "of no contact for the future but such as is hos-"tile in the most inveterate degree." * These were not mere empty words. So resolute was Murray's defence, that, far superior as were the enemy, both in numbers and resources, the year had closed before they were able to make any effectual progress.

The French and Spanish grand fleet, after escorting the Minorca armament to near its destination, steered their course to the British channel, and threatened the British coasts. According to the accounts received in England, they amounted to forty-nine sail of the line, while Admiral Darby had at that time only twenty-one. On learning the enemy's approach, and, on considering his own disparity of force, he judiciously withdrew into Torbay, and there awaited an attack. Count de Guichen, the French Admiral, was for at once pursuing and engaging him. "Now, at last," he cried, "these English will be caught as in a net!" But several of his own flag-officers, together with all

* On receiving this reproof De Crillon wrote a second note, as though ashamed — and justly — of his first. "Your letter "places us each in his proper station. It confirms me in the "esteem I have always had for you. I accept with pleasure your "last proposition." (October 16. 1781.) The answer of the elder Crillon to the King of France had been, that he was ready to challenge the Duke of Guise, and to fight, but not to murder, him. (Sismondi, Histoire des Français, vol. xx. p. 459.)

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the Spaniards, dissented from his views; so they remained at sea, hoping to intercept the merchantmen upon their voyage homeward. It soon appeared, however, that their own ships, more especially the Spanish ones, were, in many cases, neither sound nor yet well manned. Some hard gales, at the beginning of September, reduced them to great distress; and, relinquishing any further enterprise, they found it necessary to sail back to their own ports.*

At nearly the same period, Admiral Hyde Parker, who, with some ships of war, was escorting a large merchant fleet from the Baltic, fell in, near the Dogger Bank, with another convoy and another squadron of Holland. A conflict ensued, recalling the remembrance of the hard-fought, and doubtful battles between the two navies, in the reign of Charles the Second. It is plain from this, says a contemporary, that those nations contend with the greatest eagerness whose interest it is not to contend at all.† In the Dogger Bank action, the loss on each side was great, though greatest on the Dutch; but the honour of the day was equally divided. The two fleets, both, in great measure, disabled, lay to for some time to repair, after which the Dutch Admiral—his name was Zouttman—bore

* On these movements in the Channel see some letters from Mr. Fox, who was then visiting at Saltram. These letters are published by Lord John Russell in his "Memorials," but erroneously transferred to the year 1779. (vol. i. p. 281—285.)

† Ann. Regist. 1782, part i. p. 120.

away for the Texel, a movement which the British chief was in no condition to oppose. CHAP. LXIV. 1781.

When Admiral Parker himself returned with his shattered squadron to the Nore, he had the honour to receive a visit from the King on board his ship, and was gratified with marked expressions of the Royal favour. As was rumoured, he said, in reply: "Sir, I wish your Majesty younger officers, "and better ships. As for me, I am grown too old "for the service." It is certain that he persisted in resigning his command; and it is probable that discontent with the conduct of the Admiralty Board had some share, at least, in his determination. He complained, it is said, of the ill state, or insufficient number, of his ships. Yet how, with so many foes around us, could we send forth a large fleet on every side?

In the West Indies Admiral Rodney had returned to his post from New York, before the close of the preceding year. He failed in an attempt to recover St. Vincent's, but on learning the declaration of war against Holland, undertook a more important enterprise. Taking on board a body of troops under General Vaughan, he surrounded with his fleet the Dutch island of St. Eustatia. Strongly fortified as it was by nature, —it had, indeed, but a single landing-place,—the consternation of so sudden an attack induced the commandant, M. de Graaf, to surrender at the first summons. The value of the capture was immense, and such as to astonish the captors

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themselves. Above 150 merchantmen, some of them richly laden, were taken in the bay, besides six ships of war; and another convoy, which had already sailed, was pursued and brought back by Rodney's orders. This, however, was but part of the prize. The whole island seemed to be only one vast magazine. Not only were the store-houses filled with goods of various kinds, but the beach was covered with hogsheads of sugar and tobacco; and the value of the whole property seized on shore was loosely calculated at upwards of 3,000,000*l.** Great part of the property was found to belong to British subjects; yet it did not seem on that account deserving of exemption. Sir George Rodney saw grounds to bring a public charge against his resident countrymen, as also their correspondents on the other West India islands; that, regardless of the duty which they owed their Sovereign, they had contracted with the enemy to supply him with provisions and naval stores. For this reason the Admiral stood firm against the numerous applications to have the property restored, which came both from the merchants and from the Assembly of St. Kitts', enforced by Mr. Glanville, their Attorney-General.

It is due to Rodney to observe, that, in this his vigorous determination, he had no thought of lucre

* For the capture of St. Eustatia, compare the statements in the Annual Register (1781, part i. p. 101.) with the speeches of Burke, Rodney, and Vaughan, in the House of Commons. (Debate, December 4. 1781.) Rodney's correspondence at this time is published in his Life by Mundy. (vol. ii. p. 6—108.)

to himself; he desired only to avenge the public wrong. "It is a vast island of thieves, a nest of "vipers," Rodney writes. At the same time, in his despatch to the Secretary of State, he says, expressly: "The whole I have seized for the King "and the State, and I hope will go to the public "revenue of my country. I do not look upon "myself as entitled to one sixpence, neither do I "desire it." But his severity, although it took its rise in an honest and becoming indignation, exceeded perhaps the bounds of justice, and certainly produced many individual cases of grievance and hardship. Soon afterwards it became the subject both of litigation in the English Courts, and of debates in the English Parliament. The first severity, it was also alleged, had been followed by others; when the Americans, and likewise the Jews, who were both numerous and wealthy at St. Eustatia, had, by a summary edict, been banished and transported from the island. Of these Americans, however, some at least had shown far more of skill than of good faith. They had been avowedly the agents and correspondents of the insurgent Colonies; yet, no sooner was the island taken, than they boldly claimed protection as subjects of the British Crown. The case of the Jews was considerably harder; yet the edge of the complaint made on their behalf was much deadened when General Vaughan, a plain, blunt soldier, spoke as follows in the House of Commons: "As "to the Jews, I had ordered a ship to carry them

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" to St. Thomas's, at their own request; and after " they had been taken to St. Kitt's without my " knowledge, I ordered their houses and property " to be restored to them; and that they were well " satisfied with my conduct, will appear from an " address presented to me from their synagogue."*

Great as were the captures at St. Eustatia, they did not enrich the British treasury. Part was granted by the King to the fleet and land-forces as prize; part on its way home was taken by a squadron from France; part being sold on the spot was purchased by subjects of the neutral Powers; and thus, it is said, in many cases was still conveyed, and even at cheaper rates, to the enemy. The loss to the Dutch, however, was immense, nor was it confined to this quarter alone. Their shipping up the rivers Demerara and Essequibo was captured under the very guns of their forts by a squadron of privateers, mostly equipped from Bristol; and the alarmed inhabitants hastened to surrender to the Governor of Barbadoes, as to a more legitimate authority, the settlements themselves.

In Europe the French had for some time been preparing, and early in this year they sent forth a formidable armament, in aid of their distant dependencies. That armament proceeded some way into the Atlantic, and there parted; the first division under the Bailli de Suffren, for the East Indies; the second under Comte de Grasse, for the West.

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. p. 782.

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De Grasse, on his arrival, assumed the chief command of the French fleet; and, by the ships which he brought, had made it far superior to the English. There was a partial action, or, rather, a distant cannonade, between the English vanguard, commanded by Sir Samuel Hood, and some of the French ships; but Rodney was not able to attack their main body with any prospect of advantage. Nor could he prevent the Marquis de Bouillé, the Governor General of Martinico, from invading several of the English islands. The Marquis was repulsed from St. Lucia, but he prevailed against Tobago. Even there his success was, in some part, due to a not very soldierly expedient; every four hours he set on fire four plantations, declaring that he should continue to do so, until the inhabitants surrendered. At the close of summer, Rodney, whom the climate had afflicted with a painful ailment, availed himself of the King's permission to return home, and recruit his health. He left the command with another excellent officer, Sir Samuel Hood, while De Grasse, who had received a further reinforcement, profited by his great superiority, and stationing some of his ships at Martinico, sailed, with the rest, to the Chesapeak.

Upon the whole, in the West Indies, as in the East, and as in the European seas, the honour of the British flag, — standing, singly, against all the other chief navies of the world, — was worthily maintained. How little, at that time, need we have

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feared either the formidable array of the hostile Powers, or the high-sounding alliance of the Armed Neutrality, had any hope remained of winning back our own insurgent Colonies!

CHAPTER LXIV.

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From New York Sir Henry Clinton had, as he hoped, effected a diversion in favour of Cornwallis, by a descent upon the coast of Virginia. Before the close of the preceding year, some ships, with about 1,600 troops on board, had been despatched upon that service. The command had been given to General Arnold, but he was instructed to consult, on all occasions, two most deserving officers sent with him, Colonels Dundas and Simcoe. Even before they sailed, they began to feel the evils of the contract and commissary systems of that time. Thus writes Colonel Simcoe: "In the "embarkation from New York, the horse-vessels "were very bad, infamously provided, and totally "unfit for service: in consequence, above forty "horses had to be thrown overboard."*

Arnold, with his first division, sailed up the river James, made good his landing without difficulty, and destroyed in divers places the public stores and tobacco magazines. Next, according to his instructions, he repaired to Portsmouth, on Elizabeth river, where he took post and threw up trenches. His

* Journal of the Queen's Rangers, p. 115.

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progress thus far had been much assisted by a mutiny at that very juncture among the American troops. For a long time past they had endured the greatest distresses for lack of pay, of clothing, and even of food; and their repeated complaints to Congress had met with no attention, or at least with no redress. On New Year's day then, about 1,300 of the Pennsylvanians, who were stationed near Morristown, rose in insurrection, and discarded their General, Wayne, and their other officers, killing one Captain, and mortally wounding another. They seized six field-pieces, with which they commenced their march to Philadelphia, as to the seat of Congress, declaring that they would obtain justice for themselves. It was natural for the English commander to expect to derive advantage from their revolt; and accordingly he sent them two emissaries with some tempting proposals. But the insurgents (as these men might in a twofold sense be called), had no idea, in their own phrase, of "turning Arnolds." They came to terms with a Committee of Congress, which met them at Trenton, and, giving up Sir Henry's agents, allowed them to be hanged as spies.*

Freed from this alarm, and from another of the same kind in the New Jersey troops, Washington was able to turn his attention to Virginia. He sent in that direction the Marquis de la Fayette, with a detachment of 1,200 men. To co-operate

* Life of Washington, by Sparks, p. 346. Memoirs of Reed, vol. ii. pp. 312—332.

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with this force, a squadron of three French ships, under M. de Tilly, sailed from Newport, the blockade of the British fleet having been terminated by a violent storm. But neither by sea nor land was any thing of the least importance achieved. The Americans were animated by the hopes of taking Arnold; in which case, Washington had given La Fayette written instructions to deal with him "in the most summary way," that is, to shoot or hang him on the spot.*

Arnold, however, did not long retain the chief command. A negotiation as to the prisoners was at this time in progress. The American rulers, after manifold evasions and delays, had made up their minds to leave wholly unfulfilled the engagement plighted in their name with the English chiefs at Saratoga. With perfect coolness they proceeded to deal with these men as with ordinary prisoners of war. On this footing, General Phillips, who among the captives held the next rank to Burgoyne, was exchanged for General Lincoln, the late Governor of Charleston. Other exchanges of the same kind set free from their long captivity the remaining officers of the Convention troops. But the Americans would, on no account, let go the common men. Phillips, upon his release, was despatched by Sir Henry Clinton with reinforcements to the post at Portsmouth; and, as the senior in rank, reduced Arnold to a second place. In the

* Instructions, Feb. 20. 1781. (Washington's Writings, vol. vii. p. 419.)

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month of April, soon after his arrival, he undertook with Arnold an extensive foray through Virginia. With little opposition they advanced to Williamsburg and Petersburg; there, and at other places destroying a large amount of public stores. There, at the close of this expedition, General Phillips, a brave veteran from Prince Ferdinand's wars, fell ill of a fever and died. Thus, for a while, the command once more devolved upon Arnold.

In the south, Lord Cornwallis had been carrying on a most active winter campaign. Sir Henry Clinton had sent him, with full powers, the utmost reinforcement he could spare, and the troops at first intended for the Chesapeak, between two and three thousand men under General Leslie. But Cornwallis had no longer an inefficient foe before him. The Congress had recalled General Gates at the close of the last campaign, and in his stead, on Washington's recommendation, had appointed General Greene. Nathaniel Greene was a native of Warwick, in Rhode Island, born in 1742. His father was a Quaker preacher, and also the master of a forge. To the second of these callings was young Nathaniel bred. Even as a working smith, he showed an early aptitude for mathematical pursuits. He would employ his leisure hours in making small anchors, and other such toys as he could readily dispose of, that he might, from the fruits of his labour, purchase a few books. One of the happiest days of his life he declares, was that which first saw him possessed in this manner of an

Euclid. In 1770, he was elected to the General Assembly of his native colony. In 1774, he married.* But neither his Quaker training, nor yet his wedded ties, withheld him from engaging, as his sense of public duty directed, in his country's service. In the very year of his marriage, he enrolled himself as a private in one of the independent companies. Next year, when hostilities broke forth with the mother country, so great was the dearth of officers, especially in so small a state as Rhode Island, that Greene was at once appointed to the command of its little army, with the rank of Major General. Serving at head-quarters, or near the Commander-in-Chief, he took part with credit in many of the principal transactions of the war. But he had no separate command till sent to succeed Gates in the Carolinas. There his conduct was such as well to justify Washington's recommendation. Bold and active, fertile in expedients, ever forward to meet obstacles, and not easily discouraged by reverses, he was also most warmly attached to the cause he had from the first espoused. Though, as chief, he was not once victorious in the field, it is remarkable how high his name stands even now — and justly — in the reverent remembrance of his countrymen.

* The grandson and biographer of Greene, in relating this marriage, dilates upon "that beautiful intercourse with the "other sex which forms so great a charm of American life." (p. 24. ed. 1846.) But why restrict the charm to America?

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On his arrival in the south, Greene had found in the place of Gates's army, a mere broken and dispirited remnant. Without delay he zealously applied himself, both to recruit its numbers and to raise its discipline. His resources were most inadequate. "We are living upon charity," he writes, "and subsist upon daily contributions."* In another of his letters at this period, while complaining of his destitution, there peeps out a painful revealment of the true state of the slaves. Some of his Militia men, he says, are "as ragged "and naked as the Virginia blacks." †

Greene, however, was greatly cheered by the first event of the campaign. Lord Cornwallis had detached Colonel Tarleton, with 1,000 men, horse and foot, to pursue and rout the American division of light troops, under General Morgan. On the 7th of January, Tarleton came up with the enemy, at a place called the Cow-pens. He found them about equal in infantry, but inferior in horse; on the other hand, his own troops were exhausted with fatigue, from a long night-march. Nevertheless, the impetuous Tarleton, too confident of victory, led them forward to the charge. He succeeded in throwing into confusion the first and second line of the Americans; but they quickly

* To President Reed, January 9. 1781. (Reed's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 346.)

† To General Washington, January 13. 1781. (Correspondence of the Revolution, as edited by Mr. Sparks, vol. iii. p. 208. ed. 1853.)

rallied, and became the assailants in their turn. The way-worn English were altogether overpowered. Tarleton and the cavalry made their escape from the field; but the infantry were all either slain or taken prisoners; the number of these last being full 500.

The action at the Cow-pens gave lustre to the American arms. It surprised, and mortified, but did not dispirit, Lord Cornwallis. On the contrary, he set his troops in rapid movement, cheerfully, for the sake of speed, sacrificing the greater part of his own and his officers' baggage. His object was to intercept Morgan and the prisoners at the fords of the Catawba. A sudden rise in the water, from the rains, delayed his progress; first at that stream, and next, also, at the Yadkin. But though Lord Cornwallis could not hinder Morgan from rejoining the main body under Greene, he advanced, with good success, against both these chiefs combined. It was only through Greene's great activity and judgment, that they saved themselves from being compelled to fight under many disadvantages. Closely pursued, they crossed the river Dan into Virginia, and left the whole of North Carolina at the mercy of the English.

Desisting from further pursuit, Lord Cornwallis repaired to Hillsborough. There he raised the Royal Standard, and issued a proclamation inviting all loyal subjects to join him. He had good grounds to expect the accession of considerable numbers.

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Greene himself, in his most confidential correspondence, a few weeks afterwards, speaking of the southern States, owns that "the majority is "greatly in favour of the enemy's interest now." * So important, indeed, at the time, did Cornwallis's gathering of the loyalists appear to Greene, that he determined, at all hazards, to impede it. He crossed the Dan once more, with the aid of some new Virginian Militia, and hung upon Cornwallis's flank and rear. It so chanced, that immediately afterwards, a body of some 200 loyalists, on their way to join the British, fell in with Greene's vanguard, under Colonel Lee, which they mistook for their own friends. Colonel Lee, on the contrary, detected them at once from the badge which they bore—a red rag upon their hats. Thus they were taken wholly unawares, in a long, narrow lane, near the river Haw; and they were beginning to protest that they were "the very best friends of the "King," when, suddenly, their countrymen, deaf to all cries for mercy, fell upon them, and cut them down, without resistance, in cold blood. Cruelty is not always—would that it were!—ineffectual for its objects; and this dire act of slaughter certainly tended, in a great degree, to keep back the other Carolina loyalists, and scare them from the new-raised Royal Standard.

Greene, though at first unequal to Cornwallis, received, by degrees, both reinforcements and sup-

* To President Reed, May 4. 1781.

plies. Choosing some strong ground, near Guilford court-house, he no longer declined the battle which the English General offered. It was fought on the 15th of March, and was well contested. At length, the Americans, consisting, in part, of raw Militia, were utterly defeated, and driven from the field, leaving behind their artillery, and upwards of 300 dead. In the words of one of their historians: "No battle, in the course of the "war, reflects more honour on the courage of the "British troops than this of Guilford. On no "other occasion had they fought with such infe-"riority of numbers, or disadvantages of ground."* This inferiority of numbers was, indeed, considerable. Lord Cornwallis, in his despatch to Sir Henry Clinton, reports his troops in the action as 1,600; and declares his opinion that the enemy in front of him were 7,000. The best American authorities observe that, not counting their first line, which fled without a struggle, the force that really fought on their side was 3,200.

However signal was this victory, it brought no fruits to Lord Cornwallis. He had expected some reinforcements from among the country people; but, as is stated by himself: "Many of the in-"habitants rode into camp; shook me by the hand; "said they were glad to see us, and to hear that we "had beat Greene, and then rode back again." †

* Marshall's Life of Washington, vol. iv. p. 345.

† To Sir H. Clinton, April 10. 1781. (Corresp. published in 1783. p. 10.)

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One third of his own small force had been disabled in the fight; the remainder were exhausted with fatigue, and straitened for supplies. Thus, unable to improve his advantages, he fell back, by easy marches, towards the coast, fixing his head-quarters at Wilmington, a small seaport on the Cape Fear river. Greene followed in his track for some marches, appearing, to his own surprise, in the light of a pursuer so soon after his great defeat. Ere long, however, Greene stopped short, and took a different direction. He had judiciously resolved, instead of following Lord Cornwallis any further, to renew the war in South Carolina, and attack Lord Rawdon, who commanded the British posts in that province.

At Wilmington, Lord Cornwallis halted for about three weeks. He found himself in great perplexity as to his future plans. Even after calling in some outposts, his whole force was but 1,500 men. With these, should he march back to South Carolina, and relieve Lord Rawdon; or advance into Virginia, and join Generals Phillips and Arnold? Compelled to decide without consulting Clinton, he resolved upon the latter course; and, on the 25th of April, commenced his march to the northward. He made his way through Virginia, with little or no opposition from the people; impeded only by the number of rivers to be crossed, and by the difficult nature of the country. On the 20th of May he arrived at Petersburg. There he had to mourn the recent death of his friend

General Phillips, but found General Arnold strengthened by another detachment from New York. The whole united force amounted to nearly 7,000 men.

With this augmented army, General Arnold did not remain. He had lately stated it as his opinion, in his letters to Lord George Germaine, that his former post at West Point might yet be reduced by a few days' regular attack. Lord George had referred the project back to Sir Henry Clinton, as one highly deserving of adoption. By his own, as well as by Sir Henry's wish, Arnold now sailed for New York, to consult upon this project, which, however, came to nothing. Indeed, the whole effective force of Clinton, at this time, as we learn from his despatches, was exactly 10,931.* Far from undertaking a campaign in the Highlands, on doubtful representations, he desired to recall the last detachments from Virginia, if Cornwallis could spare them. He had cause to apprehend an attack of the French and Americans combined, upon New York; an attack which Washington several times seriously planned, and brought to the brink of execution, but which difficulties on his side had always hitherto prevented.

In Virginia, where Jefferson was Governor, and where La Fayette commanded, the Americans were, as yet, much inferior to Cornwallis. "I am not

* To Earl Cornwallis, June 11. 1781. (Corresp. published 1783, p. 115.)

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"strong enough even to get beaten!" writes La Fayette to Washington.* The English Earl sent out, from his head-quarters, two light expeditions; the one under Colonel Tarleton, the other under Colonel Simcoe. They had great success; both Jefferson and La Fayette most narrowly escaping. Cornwallis, who himself undertook some rapid marches in advance, had strong hopes of seizing his young French adversary. "The boy cannot "escape me!"—these words, it is said, he used in some letters written home, which, after the event, were well remembered.† To slip away from a superior force, by dint of good intelligence and celerity of movements, is no high military exploit; it is the highest, however, that, as the leader of an army, History has to record of the Marquis de La Fayette.

In the south, General Greene had never been able to collect again the greater part of the Militia scattered far and wide at the battle of Guilford. With nearly 2,000 men, however, he advanced against Lord Rawdon, who held the post of Camden with 900. On coming up, the American chief judged it best to wait for reinforcements; and, meanwhile, took post some two miles from Camden upon Hobkirk's Hill. On the other hand, Lord Rawdon determined to sally forth and attack him, before his reinforcements could arrive. The

* Letter, May 24. 1781. (Corresp. of the Revolution, vol. iii. p. 322. ed. 1853.)

† Gordon's Hist. Amer. Rev. vol. iv. p. 111.

action was fought on the 25th of April; the very day on which Lord Cornwallis began his march from Wilmington. After a sharp conflict, Lord Rawdon found himself master of the field, having driven the Americans with heavy loss from the heights which they had held. Thus, only a few days afterwards, does their General describe his situation and his views: "We fight, get beat, and "fight again. We have so much to do, and so "little to do it with, that I am much afraid these "States must fall, never to rise again; and what "is more, I am persuaded they will lay a train "to sap the foundation of all the rest." *

But, as usual in this singular campaign, the British, though victorious, did not reap the fruits of victory. Greene took another post, only a few miles distant from them, and applied himself, with great success, to cut off their supplies, and harass their communications. Before the middle of May, Lord Rawdon, unable to bring Greene to a second action, found it necessary (first, however, destroying his least portable stores), to relinquish Camden, and fall back for the protection of Charleston.

The exertions of Greene at this juncture were well seconded by one of his own detachments under Colonel Lee, and by the partisan warfare of Marion and Sumpter, who, upon this change of fortune, had again emerged. Fort Watson, Fort Motte, Fort Granby, and several others on the

* Private Letter from Greene to Washington, May 1. 1781.

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frontier, fell into their hands. Greene himself was, indeed, repulsed by Colonel Cruger, in the attack upon the larger post of Ninety Six, even before the arrival of Lord Rawdon, who had received some Irish reinforcements, and was on his march to raise the siege. Yet, here again, after this success, Lord Rawdon had no better choice than to draw off the garrison, and to give up the post, which, at such a distance, he was no longer able to maintain.

The midsummer heats, so scorching and so sickly in that climate, led, at this time, to a few weeks' suspension of the war. During the interval, Lord Rawdon, whose health had been greatly impaired by his exertions, availed himself of a permission, previously obtained, to embark for Europe. Just before he sailed, Charleston became the scene of a military execution, deemed requisite as a political example. Colonel Isaac Hayne, an American who had acceded to the English, and taken their oath of allegiance, was afterwards captured when in arms against them; and, being brought before a Court of Inquiry, was sentenced to be hanged, and was hanged accordingly. This act drew from General Greene the most vehement denunciations, — as though it had been a wanton murder, or, in his own words, an "inhuman in-"sult," — as though it might have justified the severest vengeance upon the unoffending British prisoners in his hands. Some months later, the Duke of Richmond also made the case of Hayne

the subject of an accusatory motion, in the House of Lords. On both sides of the Atlantic was the character of Lord Rawdon unsparingly assailed. Greene, indeed, thought fit to charge him with being pusillanimous, as well as cruel; "perpe- "trating this atrocity at a time when his immediate "embarkation for England was to preserve him "from the danger of its consequences!" Nevertheless, it is clear, from Lord Rawdon's subsequent explanations, that Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour, being his senior on the Army List, and, in point of fact, holding the command at Charleston, was alone responsible. Lord Rawdon had, indeed, taken no part in the affair, except on the impulse of compassion. "Immediately on my arrival in "Charleston," he says, "application was made to "me by a number of ladies, principally of your "party, to save Hayne from the impending inflic- "tion. Ignorant of the complicated nature and "extent of the crime, I incautiously promised to "use my endeavours towards inducing Colonel "Balfour to lenity." Lord Rawdon did so, as his promise bound him; yet, he adds, that on a fuller knowledge of the case, "for the guilt of "Hayne not a shadow of palliation could be "found. By all the recognised laws of war, no- "thing was requisite in the case of Hayne, but to "identify his person, previous to hanging him on "the next tree." *

* See the excellent letter which Lord Rawdon, then Earl of Moira, addressed many years afterwards to the American

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It is true that in the details of this transaction, as it took place at Charleston, there appear some circumstances of irregularity, and some of harshness, both of which may be condemned. But as to the substantial merits of the sentence, they depend solely on the question whether or not it be rightful to deal "in the most summary way" with any man, sworn to one party in a war, and yet found serving on the other. If in this question the American writers desire to maintain the affirmative, according to the established military rules, then they must acquit the British officers for having executed Hayne. If the negative, then they must condemn General Washington for the written instructions which in the very same year, and in the very same contingency — that is, with the hopes of seizing Arnold — he had given to La Fayette.

On the departure of Lord Rawdon, the chief command of the troops in the field devolved upon Colonel Stewart. Greene had encamped upon Santee Hills, but, as the summer heats abated, he descended from the heights and marched against the British. The two armies met about sixty miles from Charleston, at the Eutaw Springs. There, on the 8th of September, was fought an action, the last and one of the sharpest in this American War.

General H. Lee; it is dated June 29. 1813, and printed in the Appendix (pp. xxxii—xliii.) to Lee's "Campaign of 1781 in "the Carolinas." For the statements in Greene's public and private correspondence consult p. 440. of that volume, and the biography by Greene's grandson, p. 311.

The number of slain on both sides amounted to some hundreds, and the artillery was several times taken and retaken. At the outset the English were repulsed on their whole line, but recovered themselves, and in their turn drove back the Americans, remaining that night and next day in full possession of the ground. Hence, according to the rules of war, they might be regarded as the victors, although the Americans also claimed to be so; and it was, perhaps, more truly a pitched battle. As to its result, the English reaped the customary fruits of their victories during this campaign. Ere long they found it necessary to fall back to Charleston Neck; while the greater part, not merely of the open country, not merely in South Carolina, but in Georgia, was over-run by Greene, and restored to its American allegiance. Before the close of the year the King's troops held little or nothing in either of these provinces, beyond the districts immediately adjoining their two strongholds of Charleston and Savannah.

Spain also had sent a small expedition into West Florida, and completed her re-conquest of that province by the capture of Pensacola, in May.

Meanwhile, in Virginia, Lord Cornwallis, like Lord Rawdon, had been compelled by the summer heats to slacken in his military enterprises. The force in his front was gradually augmenting. General Wayne, with the Pennsylvanians, had succeeded in joining La Fayette; and other bodies of Militia had come in. It seemed, besides, by no

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means beyond the bounds of probability that, early in the autumn, Washington and Rochambeau might combine and move upon the Chesapeak. Under such circumstances Sir Henry Clinton felt the importance of effecting a diversion, and turning some of the enemy's troops to another quarter. Towards the middle of August he had received a reinforcement of great value to him, a body of 2,400 German recruits; and at the beginning of September he despatched General Arnold with an expedition to Connecticut. This expedition, after carrying Forts Trumbull and Griswold, reduced to ashes the flourishing town of New London, with many of the vessels in the harbour; Arnold, apparently, being but little moved by the remembrance that the district thus wasted was his birthplace.* Sir Henry had in view another enterprise against Rhode Island; and a blow still far bolder upon Philadelphia, where, as in a place of full security, the Americans had collected all their principal stores and magazines. Both these projects, however, though brought to the very verge of execution, were nipped in the bud by wholly insuperable difficulties.

Sir Henry all this while, by means of an intercepted mail, had accurate intelligence of the

* Arnold states, however, in his official report: "The explosion of the powder and change of wind soon after the stores "were fired communicated the flames to part of the town, which "was, notwithstanding every effort to prevent it, unfortunately "destroyed." (MS. despatch, Sept. 8. 1781, appended to Sir Henry Clinton's Memoirs.)

enemy's most secret designs. Thus it was that he had learnt their first scheme of an attack upon New York. Thus, also, had he become apprised that in their own opinion "a visible languor to their cause "began universally to prevail." But as he declares it, "the most interesting piece of intelligence "which this capture procured us was an intimation "from the Court of France that this was the last "campaign in which the Americans were to expect "assistance of either troops or ships from that na- "tion, as she began to be apprehensive that her "own exigencies would put it out of her power to "continue her support, if the war should be pro- "tracted much longer,—thereby strongly pointing "out to us the policy of avoiding all risks as much "as possible, because it was now manifest that if "we could only persevere in escaping affront, Time "alone would soon bring about every success we "could wish." *

Hence it will be seen that even at that late period the British cause in North America was, to say the very least of it, not lost. But the current of affairs and the nature of the country were now rapidly leading to a great disaster, such as afterwards no successes could outweigh, and no skill retrieve. Among the lesser causes of that disaster must be reckoned the personal estrangement of Clinton and Cornwallis. Differences between them had for some time past been smouldering; and on

* Sir Henry Clinton's Memoirs, vol. ii. MS.

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their return to England at the peace, they eagerly assailed each other in a paper-war. Yet, without following the complaints of both into minute detail, it may be asserted that they give no just ground for the serious arraignment of either. Of the two, Clinton was probably the abler, Cornwallis the more enterprising chief; but both alike were men of the highest honour and courage, full of zeal for their country's service, and when it came to action, ever desirous to postpone—if not, in fact, postponing—their personal differences to the public cause. Both—Cornwallis more especially—may have erred in judgment; yet it seems only equitable to remember how thorny and bewildering were at this time the paths before them.

Another, and the most efficient, cause of the disaster that ensued, lay in the superiority of naval force which the French suddenly acquired in these seas. In the month of May a new chief, the Comte de Barras, had arrived from Europe, and taken the command of the French squadron, still lying at Rhode Island, and hitherto in some degree neglected.* Towards the same period, Sir Henry Clinton, at his own earnest and repeated request, had been freed from the counter-action of a most untoward colleague; Admiral Arbuthnot being recalled, and Admiral Graves appointed in his place. Thus far the chiefs only were changed,

* "Il y avait dix mois que nous étions partis de France; "nous n'avions pas encore reçu une lettre ni un écu," says the Duke de Lauzun. (Memoirs, p. 353. ed. 1822.)

and the balance of force was, as before, in favour of the English. But the balance was wholly turned against them when, in the latter part of August, the Comte de Grasse arrived from the West Indies with eight and twenty sail of the line. De Grasse was followed by Sir Samuel Hood, but Sir Samuel could bring only fourteen.

On his voyage De Grasse fell in with and took the packet from Charleston, having on board Lord Rawdon, who thus found himself within a few weeks from a victor at Hobkirk's Hill a prisoner in the Chesapeak. Entering that bay, the French Admiral set on shore between three and four thousand land troops, under the Marquis de St. Simon; a most welcome addition to the force of La Fayette. So ill-informed, meanwhile, was Hood of the true number of De Grasse's vessels, that, writing to Sir Henry Clinton from off Cape Henry, on the 25th of August, he declared his own fleet fully equal to defeat any designs of the enemy, let De Grasse bring or send what ships he might in aid to those under Barras. On these assurances Sir Henry Clinton relied, and certainly was justified in relying, and he afterwards appealed to them as indicating the hopes that he had cherished and the plans that he had formed.

Admiral Graves, on his part, hastened to join Hood with five ships, all those he had ready for sea; and, as the senior officer, he assumed the chief command. When he appeared off the Capes of Virginia, De Grasse went out to meet him with

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the greater part of his force, and there ensued between them, on the 5th of September, a desultory and indecisive action. Several ships were damaged, but none were taken, and at last, after some days, they parted; the English fleet returning to New York, and the French fleet to the Chesapeak. There De Grasse was joined by the squadron of Barras, from Newport; but, on the other hand, some ships from England, under Admiral Digby, increased the force of Graves. The relative superiority, however, still continued, as before, greatly on the side of the French. While they, in the Chesapeak, could boast thirty-six sail of the line, we, at New York, had no more than twenty-five.

Washington, meanwhile, had not been diverted from his designs against Lord Cornwallis, either by the descent of Arnold in Connecticut, or by any apprehension for Rhode Island. He was wisely impressed with the importance, at that juncture, of striking a great blow. Every where around him, he found a vague dependence on French aid unnerve and take the place of a self-relying zeal. He saw the Congress, so energetic and so well supported at its outset, utterly failing in ability, and sunk in reputation. He saw the people in the very throes of national bankruptcy; "our poor "old currency is breathing its last gasp;" writes, at this time, an accomplished lady from Boston.*

* Letter to Mr. John Adams, from "Portia," May 25. 1781. (Mrs. Adams's Correspondence, p. 125. ed. 1848.)

He saw the eastern States especially, as their own writers have acknowledged, grown almost indifferent to the war since it had passed to other shores. Thus, to use Washington's words at a later period, "some splendid advantage was "essentially necessary at the crisis in question, to "revive the expiring hopes and languid exertions "of the country." * CHAP. LXIV. 1781.

With these views, the American General, and in combination with him, Comte de Rochambeau, after several feints, drew off their main forces to Philadelphia, and from thence marched to the Head of Elk. On this onward route into Virginia, Washington was enabled to pay a passing visit to his beloved home of Mount Vernon, which he had never seen (so unremitting had been his public services) since he left it to attend the second Continental Congress, six years and a half before. On the 14th of September he reached the head-quarters of La Fayette, near Williamsburg, and assumed, of course, the chief command, while under him De Rochambeau had the more particular direction of the French. Next, the two commanders travelled towards Cape Henry, to hold a conference with Comte de Grasse on board his ship. That ship, the VILLE DE PARIS, was already much renowned; it carried 106 guns, and was, perhaps, the largest vessel then afloat; larger, certainly, than any of our own "first-rates." It had been built at lavish cost and with scientific

* See Mr. Sparks's Life of Washington, p. 360.

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care, by direction of the citizens of Paris, as a present to King Louis, who, in accepting their gift, had bestowed on it their name.*

At the conference on board the Ville de Paris, the Comte de Grasse gave his colleagues notice, that, owing to his other duties, and his precise orders from home, he could not continue on this station longer than the 1st of November. Meanwhile, it was determined to press the operations against Lord Cornwallis with the utmost vigour. The net, indeed, was rapidly closing around the English Earl. During the month of August he had relinquished Portsmouth, and taken post at York-town, in pursuance of some instructions from Sir Henry Clinton, which Sir Henry meant as permissive, but which Cornwallis understood as peremptory. York-town, as Cornwallis afterwards declared, was not, in his judgment, well adapted for defence. It is a small village, about twelve miles from Williamsburg, built upon a high bank, the southern one, of York river. There, the long peninsula, extending between the rivers York and James, is little more than eight miles broad. There, the river York itself is one mile in width; and, on a point of land projecting from the northern bank, lies Gloucester, another small village, which Cornwallis also held. Both posts, but more especially York-town as the larger, he had fortified as he best might, with redoubts and intrenchments;

* On the "Ville de Paris" see Mundy's Life of Rodney vol. ii. p. 243.

and these unfinished works he was now to maintain with 7000 men, against a force which by degrees grew to 18,000. His position was not really perilous, so long as the English retained the superiority at sea; but the great fleet of De Grasse was now interposing, and cut off his retreat.

With proper frankness Cornwallis had not left his commanding officer in any doubt as to his difficulties. So early as the 16th of September he wrote thus to Sir Henry Clinton from York-town: — "This place is in no state of defence. If you "cannot relieve me very soon, you must expect to "hear the worst."

It was on the 28th of the same month that the combined army of Americans and French first appeared in sight of York-town. Cornwallis is alleged to have neglected a favourable opportunity to fall upon and overpower the separate division of La Fayette before it was supported by the rest. Yet such success, had it even been achieved, and had not the Americans come up quicker than was thought, could have had no material bearing on the result of the campaign. On the evening of the 29th the English General was cheered by the arrival of an express, bringing despatches from Sir Henry Clinton of the 24th of September. "At a meeting," wrote Sir Henry, "of the General and Flag Offi- "cers, held this day, it is determined that above "5,000 men, rank and file, shall be embarked on "board the King's ships, and the joint exertions of "the navy and army made in a few days to relieve

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"you, and afterwards co-operate with you. The "fleet consists of twenty-three sail of the line, three "of which are three-deckers. There is every "reason to hope we start from hence the 5th of "October."

On the same night after receiving these despatches, Cornwallis, in expectation of speedy succour, drew in his troops from the outward defences, and confined them to the entrenchments of the town. It was a step for the Americans which they had not expected to secure so soon. "By "this means," writes Washington, "we are in "possession of very advantageous grounds, which "command the British line of works in a very "near advance." On the 1st of October he was enabled to report to the President of Congress his investment as fully completed.* Gloucester, which was held by Colonel Dundas, was beleaguered by some Virginian Militia, and by the French legion of the Duke de Lauzun. Yorktown, where Cornwallis, in person, and with his main force commanded, saw, to its left, the division of La Fayette; and to its right, the division of St. Simon. Other bodies of troops filled the space between them, while Washington and Rochambeau fixed their posts near together, towards the centre. They brought up fifty pieces of cannon, for the most part heavy, by aid from the French ships, as also sixteen mortars; and they lost no time in commencing their first parallel against the town.

* Works, vol. viii. p. 169.

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On the other part, Lord Cornwallis is admitted to have shown most undaunted resolution. The officers under him, and the troops, German and English, all did their duty well. For some weeks they had laboured hard and unremittingly, in raising their defences; and they were now prepared, with equal spirit, to maintain their half-completed works. But, besides the enemy without, they had another foe within — an epidemic sickness, that stretched many hundreds helpless on their pallet-beds. Nor could they hinder Washington from completing his first parallel, and opening his fire upon them on the evening of the 9th of October. For two days the fire was incessant from heavy cannon, and from mortars and howitzers, throwing shells in showers on the town, until, says Cornwallis, all our guns on the left were silenced, our works much damaged, and our loss of men considerable. By these shells, also, the Charon, a ship of forty-four guns, together with three British transports in the river, were set in flames, and consumed. On the night of the 11th the enemy began their second parallel at about three hundred yards; that is, at only half the distance of the former. Cornwallis did all in his power to delay, for prevent he could not, the progress of this work, by opening new embrasures for guns, and keeping up a constant fire with all the howitzers and small mortars that he could man.

In their approaches the enemy were also, in some degree, impeded by two redoubts which the British had constructed in advance to cover their left

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flank. These Washington resolved to storm; and, for the sake of exciting emulation, he entrusted the attack of the one to the Americans, and of the other to the French. Both attacks were made in the night of the 14th, and with full success; and, by the unwearied exertions of the enemy, both redoubts were included in their second parallel by day-break the next morning.

Up to this time Lord Cornwallis had been cheered by the expectation of speedy aid. Often and anxiously must he have looked out for a white sail gleaming in the distance on the blue waters of the bay. But, on the 15th, the morning after the redoubts were stormed, it was clear to him that the expedition from New York had been either, by some accident, delayed, or, by the superiority of the French fleet, turned aside. Writing, on that day, a few lines in cypher to Sir Henry, Cornwallis described his prospects as follows:— "My situ- "ation now becomes very critical. We dare not "show a gun to their (the enemy's) old batteries, "and I expect that their new ones will open to- "morrow morning. Experience has shown that "our fresh earthen works do not resist their power- "ful artillery; so that we shall soon be exposed "to an assault in ruined works, in a bad position, "and with weakened numbers. The safety of the "place is, therefore, so precarious, that I cannot "recommend that the fleet and army should run "great risk in endeavouring to save us."

Lord Cornwallis, however, with a true soldier's

spirit, while discounselling "great risk" to others, was ready to run any risk, however great, of his own. A little before day-break of the 16th he ordered a sally of about 350 men, under the direction of Lieutenant-Colonel Abercrombie, to attack two of the enemy's batteries, which appeared to be in the greatest forwardness, and to spike their guns. The gallant little band, well led under Abercrombie by Armstrong and by Lake, carried all before them, forcing the redoubt, spiking eleven of the guns, and killing or wounding about one hundred of the French. But this action, though extremely honourable to the officers and soldiers who performed it, proved of little public good; for the cannon having, of necessity, been spiked in haste, were soon rendered fit for service once more. "And before dark," says Cornwallis, "the enemy's "whole parallel and batteries appeared to be nearly "complete. At this time we knew that there was "no part of the whole front attacked on which we "could show a single gun, and our shells were "nearly expended. I had, therefore, only to "choose between preparing to surrender next day, "or endeavouring to get off with the greatest part "of the troops; and I determined to attempt the "latter."

For that enterprise Lord Cornwallis had provided sixteen large boats, which, upon other pretexts, were ordered to be in readiness to receive troops that same evening at ten o'clock. With these it was hoped to pass the infantry during the night to

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Gloucester, relinquishing the baggage, and leaving a small detachment to capitulate for the town's people, and for the sick and wounded. The plan of Cornwallis was next to force the enemy's lines in front of Gloucester, and cut to pieces or disperse their troops; then to mount his men on horses taken from the French or the country people; to gain, by a rapid march, the fords of the great rivers, and make his way through Maryland and the Jerseys to New York. Considering the vast extent of country to be passed, and the superiority of the force in his rear, the enterprise appears not merely daring, but desperate; still, slight as were its chances, Cornwallis far preferred them to surrender. The first embarkation of troops had already gone to the northern bank, when the whole project was marred and arrested by the weather, which, from calm and fair, suddenly changed to a most violent storm of wind and rain. The crossing of the other troops that night became impossible; all that could be done was to bring back next forenoon the detachments that had already passed.

Meanwhile, as Cornwallis had expected, the enemy's batteries before York-town had opened at day-break. Nothing now remained for him but to obtain the best terms he could. On that morning, then, the 17th of October, he sent a flag of truce to Washington, proposing a cessation of arms, and a treaty for the capitulation of his post. Washington, in reply, required him to state within two hours the terms which he demanded. In a second letter

hereupon Cornwallis asked that the garrisons of York and Gloucester, though laying down their arms as prisoners of war, should be sent home,—the Britons to Britain, and the Germans to Germany, under engagement not to serve against France, America, or their allies, until in due form exchanged. The American General declared these terms to be inadmissible, and the Earl then agreed to waive them. It appears probable, indeed, that they were proposed only for the sake of form or show. Their fulfilment would have depended on the Congress, and not on the personal high honour and probity of Washington. And with the event of Saratoga full in his mind, it must have seemed to Lord Cornwallis a question of utter and complete indifference whether the Americans did or did not stipulate to set their captives free.

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On this basis then—as yielded by Cornwallis, on the morning of the 18th of October — a cessation of arms was continued, and a negotiation begun. The Commissioners, two field-officers being named on each side, conferred together, and discussed the terms that same day. All the artillery and public stores in the two forts, together with the shipping and boats in the two harbours, were to be surrendered by the English. On the other hand, private property of every kind was to be respected by the Americans and French. The garrisons of York and Gloucester were to march out with the same honours of war as had been granted by Sir Henry Clinton at Charleston; the land forces to

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remain prisoners of the United States, and the naval forces prisoners of France. The soldiers were to be kept in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania, and as much by regiments as possible. The General, Staff, and other officers not left with the troops, to be permitted to go to New York or to Europe on parole.

"It is remarkable," says an American historian, "that while Colonel Laurens, the officer employed "by General Washington (in conjunction with "the Vicomte de Noailles), was drawing up these "articles, his father was closely confined in the "Tower of London, of which Lord Cornwallis was "Constable. By this singular combination of cir-"cumstances, his Lordship became a prisoner to "the son of his own prisoner!" *

An addition which Washington made as follows, to the article on private effects, appears, at first sight, obscure: "It is understood that any pro-"perty, obviously belonging to the inhabitants of "these States, in the possession of the garrison, "shall be subject to be reclaimed." But here the obscurity has been cleared away by another historian of America. The American chiefs, he says, felt the inconsistency, while struggling for their own independence, of stipulating for the subjection of any of their fellow-men; and they therefore adopted this covert phrase, for the pur-

* Ramsay's History of the American Revolution, vol. ii. p. 271.

pose of restoring to their rightful owners the Virginian slaves.*

Cornwallis, on his part, was honourably anxious to protect from harm the native loyalists within his lines; and he proposed as the tenth article, that no such men were "to be punished on account of "having joined the British army." Washington wrote in reply: "This article cannot be assented "to, being altogether of civil resort." Means were found, however, with Washington's connivance, to obtain the same object in another form. It was stipulated, that, immediately after the capitulation, the Bonetta sloop of war was to sail for New York unsearched, with despatches from Lord Cornwallis to Sir Henry Clinton, and with as many soldiers on board as he should think fit to send; provided only that the vessel were returned, and that the soldiers were accounted for as prisoners in a future exchange. By this expedient was the British chief enabled to secure a safe conduct to his American adherents. It did not prevent, however, the other loyalists at New York and elsewhere, from complaining loudly that any capitulation had been signed after the tenth article had been refused. Still much more did they resent the use of the word "punished" in that article, as Cornwallis first proposed it; for "punishment," they said, must imply some previous crime; and their only crime had been allegiance to their King.

* Gordon, vol. iv. p. 196.

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The articles of the capitulation, having been finally fixed by Washington and accepted by Cornwallis, were signed by the respective Generals on the morning of the 19th of October. On the British side, about 500 men had been killed or wounded during the progress of the siege. At its close, the British and German troops, exclusive of the seamen, amounted to 6,000; but so great was the number of the sick and the disabled, that there remained less than 4,000 fit for duty. At two o'clock that afternoon, as agreed in the capitulation, the Yorktown troops marched out with their drums beating, their arms shouldered, and their colours cased, to lay down their arms before the enemy, Americans and French, drawn out in line. The officer specially appointed to receive them was General Lincoln, the chief of their captives at Charleston in the preceding year. Yet Washington, with his usual lofty spirit, had no desire to aggravate the anguish and humiliation of honourable foes. On the contrary, he bade all mere spectators keep aloof from the ceremony, and suppressed all public signs of exultation.

The scene which ensued is described by an eye-witness, a French chaplain of the Count de Rochambeau. The two lines of the Allied army, says Abbé Robin, were drawn out for upwards of a mile; the Americans having the right. The disproportion of heights and of ages in their men, and their soiled and ragged clothing, might be unfavourably contrasted with the neater and more

soldierly appearance of the French. Yet, under such circumstances, the personal disadvantages of a raw Militia should rather be looked upon as an enhancement of the triumph they had gained. The Abbé was struck at seeing, from several indications, how much keener was at that time the animosity between the English and Americans than between the English and French. Thus, the English officers, when they laid down their arms, and were passing along the enemy's lines, courteously saluted every French officer, even of the lowest rank; a compliment which they withheld from every American, even of the highest.

The followers of the English army left defenceless at York-town, were exposed to much ill-treatment on the part of the native soldiers, thirsting, it was said, for vengeance. Abbé Robin saw an English lady, a Colonel's wife, come in tears to implore, for herself and for her children, the protection of French generosity against American outrage.* On the other hand, we find the English officers and soldiers — the actual prisoners of war — bear willing testimony to the kindness they received. Thus speaks Lord Cornwallis, in his letter to Sir Henry Clinton: "The treatment

* "Les Anglais restés à York sans armes, eurent à souffrir "de beaucoup d'Americains qui voulaient se venger des bri- "gandages commis dans leurs habitations. J'ai vu la femme "d'un Colonel Anglais venir éplorée, supplier nos officiers de "lui donner une garde pour la defendre, elle et ses enfans, de la "violence du soldat Americain." (Voyage en Amerique, par l'Abbé Robin, p. 141. ed. 1782.)

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"in general, that we have received from the "enemy, since our surrender, has been perfectly "good and proper. But the kindness and atten- "tion that has been shown to us by the French "officers in particular, their delicate sensibility of "our situation, their generous and pressing offer "of money, both public and private, to any "amount, has really gone beyond what I can "possibly describe, and will, I hope, make an "impression on the breast of every English officer, "whenever the fortune of war should put any of "them into our power."

But, where was Sir Henry Clinton meanwhile? He had prepared his auxiliary force at New York, and was ready and eager to embark on the 5th of October. The ships, on the contrary, were ill provided, and the Admirals slow. "We had the mis- "fortune," Clinton writes, "to see almost every "succeeding day produce some naval obstruction "or other to protract our departure; and I am "sorry to add, that it was the afternoon of the 19th "before the fleet was fairly at sea." This was the very day of Lord Cornwallis's capitulation; and, on coming off the Chesapeak, they received, in due course, the news of that event. Nothing, then, was left for them, but to go back whence they came. It is to be noted, that if the fleet could have sailed in time, the relief to Lord Cornwallis need not have been hindered by the enemy's superiority at sea. Thus continues Sir Henry in his unpublished Memoirs:—"The Flag Officers of the fleet, who

"were present when this matter was debated in "Council, were all clearly of opinion that thirty-"six ships of the line could not, in the position "the French fleet had taken between the Mid-"dle Ground and Horseshoe Flats, prevent even "twenty-three from passing, with a leading wind "and tide, into either York or James's river. The "reasons given were, that the enemy's ships, being "unable, from the violence of the tide, and great "swell of the sea that runs in that channel, to avail "themselves of the springs upon their cables, their "broadsides could not be brought to bear on ships "approaching them end on; and after a passage "should be effected, they would not dare suddenly "to weigh or cut for the purpose of following, lest "they should be driven on shore."

With the surrender of Lord Cornwallis, the American War may be said to have concluded; so far at least as its active military operations were concerned. It was a war by no means, as we sometimes hear alleged of it, founded on any plain or palpable injustice in point of law, since at the outset, when the taxes were first imposed, the English Ministers might point to nearly all the highest authorities as affirming the abstract right of taxation we possessed. But, beyond all doubt, it was a war proceeding on the grossest impolicy, from the moment it was seen how much resentment the exercise of that right provoked. For the mere barren assertion of that right — for a mere peppercorn of rent — we alienated, and, as it were, in wantonness, flung

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from us provinces which, at the peace of 1763, had been as contented and loyal as the shires along the Severn or the Thames. We grew wiser, but too late. Earnest and more earnest overtures, larger and then larger concessions, were tendered, from time to time, to the uprisen Colonies, but always a few weeks or a few months beyond the period when they might yet have healed the wound. The same utter want of policy which provoked the war was shown in its first direction. Our most skilful commanders, our most daring enterprises, seemed to be reserved for the conclusion of the conflict, when skill could no more avail us, and when enterprise led only to disaster. While the opportunity was still ours—while France and Spain, so soon to combine against us, still kept aloof—while Washington's army, for example, was in full flight, or Gates's was not yet formed, then it is that we find General Howe content to bound his conquests at the Delaware, and General Burgoyne refrain a whole month from his advance to Albany. Such was the system in the Cabinet, against which our greatest statesmen warned the Ministry in vain. Such were the errors in the field which even the occasional skill of our officers, and the constant bravery of our troops, could not retrieve. Thus did we alienate a people with whom we might perhaps, to this very day, have kept united; with them resolutely upholding peace among all other nations; with them, the leaders of the world in temperate liberty and Christian progress. They

might have been both our brother freemen and our fellow subjects, free with their own Assemblies as we are free with ours, yet bound to us beneath the golden circle of the Crown. Or if even, with their growing numbers, that golden circle had seemed to them to press, it might have been gently and quietly unloosed. We might have parted as friends and kinsmen part, not have torn asunder with a bleeding gash on either side.

The intelligence of the York-town capitulation reached London about noon on the 25th of November. Lord George Germaine, who first received it as Secretary of State, hastened to impart it in person to the Prime Minister, and, by letter, to the King. Mr. Wraxall, as it chanced, dined with Lord George that very day, and then asked him how Lord North took the communication? "As "he would have taken a cannon-ball in his breast," replied Lord George. "He opened his arms, ex- "claiming wildly, as he paced up and down the "room for a few minutes, 'Oh God! it is all over!' "words which he repeated many times under the "deepest agitation and distress."*

Far greater was the fortitude shown by George the Third. His Majesty's reply to the communication from Lord George Germaine was received

* "Historical Memoirs of My Own Time," by Sir N. Wraxall, vol. ii. p. 101. ed. 1815. Wraxall is a writer of no authority on any disputed fact, but may be allowed some credit on slight circumstances falling directly within his own observation.

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that same afternoon: it was neither tremulous in its hand-writing, nor yet despondent in its tone; it expressed his deep concern, but, at the same time, his steady resolution. There was only one little circumstance which to Lord George's practised eye betrayed unwonted emotion. In that letter the King had omitted to mark the hour and minute of his writing, as he was accustomed to do with scrupulous exactness.

At Paris, the tidings of Cornwallis's surrender arrived upon the 26th. "Most heartily,"—thus writes Franklin to John Adams, in Holland,—"do "I congratulate you on the glorious news. The "infant Hercules in his cradle has now strangled "his second serpent." The first serpent was, of course, no other than General Burgoyne. So pleased was Franklin with this classical conceit, that it afterwards formed the subject of a medal, struck by his direction.*

It is remarkable, however, that Franklin, writing only three days before to another private friend, had used the following expression: "I wish most "heartily with you that this accursed war was at "an end; but I despair of seeing it finished in my "time." †

* Note to Washington's Writings, vol. viii. p. 189.

† To Governor Pownall, November 23. 1781. Franklin's Writings, vol. ix. p. 93. ed. 1844.

CHAPTER LXV.

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The opening of the Session had been fixed for the 27th of November, only two days after the ill tidings. It became requisite on their account to frame the Royal Speech anew. As delivered by His Majesty, from the Throne, it was found to state the disaster of his army in Virginia, and to call upon his people for their "vigorous, animated, "and united exertion."

In the Upper House no sooner had the Address of Thanks been moved and seconded, than Lord Shelburne started up with an Amendment. He adverted to the King in terms of due respect, as "a "valorous and generous prince, gathering firmness "from misfortune." But on the whole conduct of the war, on the entire policy of Ministers, he descanted with severity. He was well supported by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Camden; Lord Rockingham also spoke shortly on his side. In reply, the weapons of the Government were but feebly wielded by Lord Stormont and Lord Hillsborough; the Lord Chancellor resisted the Amendment, mainly as a violation of the established forms

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of Parliament, and, on the whole, it might be said of Lord Shelburne in this debate, as was said by an Irish Member on a similar occasion,—that he had a majority in every thing but numbers! His Amendment was rejected by 75 Peers against 31.

In the Commons, an Amendment was in like manner proposed by Fox, as soon as the Address had been duly moved and seconded. He applauded the Ministry in a strain of sarcastic invective, because they had selected very young Members for that task,—a task which, he said, required the benefit of inexperience, the recommendation of ignorance! For himself, though a young man, he could not be called a young member. He had seen the whole system of Ministers; he had heard their progressive madness, impolicy, or treachery: and he was now confounded at their presuming to look the Commons' House of Parliament in the face..... He would not say that he believed they were paid by France; it was not possible for him to prove the fact; but he would venture to say that they deserved to be so paid.

This powerful philippic drew from Lord North a short but able reply. To the charge of personal corruption he referred with just disdain. Of Lord Cornwallis's capitulation he spoke with recovered firmness. "A melancholy disaster," he said, "has "occurred in Virginia; but are we, therefore, to "lie down and die? No, it ought rather to rouse "us into action; it ought to impel, to urge, to "animate, for by bold and united exertions every

"thing may be saved; by dejection and despair "every thing must be lost." The honourable gentleman had threatened with impeachment and the scaffold, but that should not deter him from striving to preserve the rights and legislative authority of Parliament. The war with America had been unfortunate, but not unjust.

Burke, in answer to this speech, poured forth a strain of most empassioned eloquence; the words of Lord North, said he, froze his blood, and harrowed up his soul. "Good God! Mr. Speaker," he exclaimed, "are we yet to be told of the rights "for which we went to war? Oh excellent rights! "oh valuable rights! Valuable you should be, for "we have paid dear at parting with you. Oh "valuable rights, that have cost England thirteen "provinces, four islands, a hundred thousand men, "and more than seventy millions of money! Oh "wonderful rights, that have lost to Great Britain "her empire on the ocean — her boasted grand "and substantial superiority, which made the world "bend before her! Oh inestimable rights, that "have taken from us our rank among nations, "our importance abroad, and our happiness at "home; that have taken from us our trade, our "manufactures, and our commerce; that have re-"duced us from the most flourishing empire in the "world to be one of the most compact, unenviable "powers on the face of the globe! Oh wonderful "rights that are likely to take from us all that yet "remains! We had a right to tax America, says

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" the Noble Lord, and as we had a right, we must " do it. . . . Oh miserable and infatuated men! " miserable and undone country! not to know that " right signified nothing without might; that the " right without the power of enforcing it was nu- " gatory and idle in the copyhold of rival states or " of immense bodies! Oh, says a silly man, full " of his prerogative of dominion over a few beasts " of the field, there is excellent wool on the back " of a wolf, and, therefore, he must be sheared. " What! shear a wolf? Yes. But will he comply? " have you considered the trouble? how will you " get this wool? Oh, I have considered nothing, " and I will consider nothing, but my right: a wolf " is an animal that has wool; all animals that have " wool are to be shorn, and, therefore, I will shear " the wolf."

In the division which ensued the Government had a great advantage, carrying their Address by 218 votes, while there were only 129 for the Amendment. The debate, however, did not conclude with the division; it was resumed on the Report of the Address. Then Burke spoke once more; then, as Horace Walpole states, Pitt " made " a most brilliant figure, to the admiration of all " sides." But, continues Walpole, it was the Lord Advocate, Henry Dundas, who on that occasion caused most surprise. Affecting great frankness, he might be said almost to adopt the language of the Opposition; he seemed to accuse the Ministers of disunion, and to blame some who

in council did not deliver their sincere opinion. However, with all this air of frankness, few could see what he meant, or whom he blamed; and the more he was pressed the more obscure he grew.* After such a speech, to retain in office this able and eloquent, but now insubordinate, placeman, was certainly a clear sign of the weakness of the Government.

Other signs of that weakness followed in quick succession. Notwithstanding the large majority on the first day, it grew manifest that many independent country gentlemen — at their head Mr. Thomas Powys, then Member for Northamptonshire, and afterwards Lord Lilford — were resolved to pursue no further the contest with the Colonies. Only a few days afterwards, when the Army Estimates were moved, Sir James Lowther, seconded by Mr. Powys, interposed with a Resolution that the war carried on in North America had been ineffectual. To guard against dangerous defection in his ranks, it became necessary for Lord North to explain those altered views at which the Lord Advocate had hinted. He was willing, he said, to declare his honest opinion that it would not be wise or right to go on with the American war as we had done, that is on a continental plan, by sending armies to march through the provinces from south to north. Even this acknowledgment

* See, besides the Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. p. 735., the Extracts from Horace Walpole's MSS., given by Lord John Russell in his Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 269.

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— as a kind of signal or notice to our enemies — he would have withheld, had it not been declared already, in the clearest manner, by the moderation of the Estimates laid upon the Table. The Estimates showed that Government could have no intention to send out a fresh army for that of Lord Cornwallis. But did not gentlemen perceive the necessity there might be for retaining certain posts in America, for the convenience even of carrying on the war against France and Spain? Must we not have ports and harbours there to give us an opportunity of acting on the seas? And would gentlemen, by adopting Sir James Lowther's Resolution, tie up the hands of Government both by sea and land?

Of the debate which ensued upon this important statement of the Ministerial policy, Horace Walpole gives the following account:—"The Lord Advo- "cate pretended to understand Lord North as "declaring against a land war. Charles Fox "pressed Lord North, over and over again, to say "if that was his meaning, but he would not say a "word more. Lord George Germaine talked of "the unanimity of Ministers, but no mortal be- "lieved him. Burke made a wild passionate "speech. He was now grown so heated, and "uttered such rhapsodies, that he was generally "very ill heard." It is remarkable, considering the extent of concession to which Lord North had gone, that Sir James Lowther's Resolution was rejected but by a majority of forty-one.

In another of these debates Sir George Savile indulged in a classical conceit, equal at least to Dr. Franklin's. He compared Ministers to the Spartan who, in a sea engagement, swam to a galley and seized it with his right hand, which the people in the galley instantly cut off. He renewed the effort with his left hand, and that was cut off too. The sailors in the galley then asked him if he meant to persevere; the Spartan answered "Not in the same way," and laid hold of the vessel with his teeth. Thus the Government had lost two armies, or both their hands, in their strife against America, and yet they were determined to go on and fasten upon it with their teeth. But they should remember that when the Spartan did so they struck off his head!

Besides these main debates, collateral points of attack were not neglected. Burke brought forward the case of the sufferers at St. Eustatia; on which occasion, both the General and Admiral, Vaughan and Rodney, were present as members, to vindicate their share in these proceedings. Another motion referred to the imprisonment of Mr. Laurens in the Tower. There had been some time in progress a negotiation for the exchange of that gentleman with General Burgoyne, whom the Americans considered as a prisoner on parole. But, impatient of the delays that had occurred, Burke laid the whole matter before the House of Commons. He designed to have carried it further after the Recess, had not Lord North, alive at last to the necessity

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of conciliation, ordered the release of Mr. Laurens, on bail, before the close of the month and year.*

Beyond the walls of Parliament, also, animated by the disaster of Cornwallis, the opponents of Lord North were stirring. In a Common Hall of the City of London, there passed an Address to the King, entreating him to put an end to "this "unnatural and unfortunate war." At a meeting of the West India merchants, the same desire was expressed; since their total ruin, they declared, could not else be averted. At a meeting of the electors of Westminster, Fox delivered a fiery speech, and carried some stringent Resolutions. Other such meetings, and with the like result, were held in Southwark, and for the counties of Middlesex and Surrey. We do not find that the example spread any further from London; yet, no doubt, throughout the country by this time popular favour had wholly departed from the war against the Colonies. It was still, it seemed, to be carried on at large cost, while even by the avowal of Ministers themselves, there was to be no more vigour in its prosecution, nor hope in its result.

There was another event which added, if to add were possible, to the heat of the Opposition at this juncture. Intelligence having been received of the equipment of a fleet at Brest to supply and reinforce the East and West India squadrons,

* See several letters upon this subject in Burke's Correspondence, vol. ii. pp. 418—454.

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Admiral Kempenfeldt was despatched to intercept it with twelve sail of the line. Kempenfeldt met the enemy some thirty leagues from Ushant, the convoy being, in some degree, scattered by a storm; and he succeeded in taking fifteen transports, conveying above a thousand soldiers and above five hundred seamen. Next, he prepared to engage the ships of war, which he found forming in battle order, and commanded by the Comte de Guichen; but, contrary to his expectation, they amounted to nineteen sail of the line, besides two others, armed EN FLUTE. In the face of so superior a force, Kempenfeldt reluctantly forbore from an attack, and sailed back to England. His return, which took place just before the Christmas Recess, became a signal for the loudest clamours and most violent invectives against his chief, Lord Sandwich. When the Secretary of the Treasury in the House of Commons was moving the usual adjournment, "What! adjourn! adjourn!" said Byng the member for Middlesex, "we ought to sit "through the holidays to inquire into this mis-"carriage." Not less decided were the sentiments of Savile. "The question of Kempenfeldt"—thus he writes to Lord Rockingham, "seems to "lie in a mighty narrow compass. When you "sent out twelve ships, did you know they had "nineteen or not? If you did not, culpable igno-"rance; if you did, worse." Sir George adds, however: "I do not say that these two dilemmas

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"ought to hang a man." Kind and relenting reasoner, not to push his point so far! *

Parliament met again in the latter part of January. During the Recess, the Ministers had, in some measure, matured their scheme of policy. They determined to proceed without Lord George Germaine, whom they found as keen as ever for the subjugation of the Colonies. Indeed he had taken occasion, not long since, in the House of Commons, to declare that be the consequences what they might, he never would be the Minister to sign any treaty that gave independence to America.† The King agreed to his resignation, provided it were dignified with a peerage. "No "one," wrote His Majesty, "can then say he is "disgraced." As his successor was selected a worn-out veteran, Welbore Ellis — the "Mani- "kin," and the "Grildrig," of Junius, — a man who was ridiculed for his diminutive stature, not in him redeemed by any loftiness of mind.

Accordingly, soon after Parliament had reassembled, the Gazette announced the creation of Germaine as Viscount Sackville, and the appointment of Ellis as Secretary of State. Loud was the Opposition outcry against both. But though the choice of Ellis might be laughed at or lamented, there was a more tangible objection to the peerage

* Sir George Savile to Lord Rockingham. (Memoirs, by Lord Albemarle, vol. ii. p. 440.)

† On Sir James Lowther's motion. (Commons' Debate, December 12. 1781.)

of Lord George. Even upon the first reports of it, the Marquis of Carmarthen moved in the Peers, that to recommend to the Crown for such a dignity any person labouring under so heavy a sentence of a Court Martial was derogatory to the honour of the House of Lords. And when the new-made Viscount took his seat the same motion was renewed. Thus the old complaint of his conduct at Minden was again ripped up; thus his first speech in that House was the attempt to clear himself from an opprobrious imputation.

The tidings that came from time to time of the progress of the war were by no means such as to raise the drooping spirits of the Ministry. In the West Indies, even before the close of the preceding year, the Marquis de Bouillé had surprised and retaken the island of St. Eustatia, mainly through the negligence of the English commander, Colonel Cockburn. Our other new conquests of Demerara and Essequibo were in like manner wrested back from us. Next De Bouillé turned his arms against our old and valuable possession of St. Kitt's, where he landed 8,000 men, protected by De Grasse's fleet. Basseterre, the capital of the island, was built of wood, and could make no defence on the land side, but the troops and the Militia, headed by General Fraser and Governor Shirley, took post on the rugged heights of Brimstone Hill. Sir Samuel Hood, also, who had followed the French Admiral in returning from the Chesapeak, interposed, by a bold manœuvre, between him and

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the French forces on shore, and most gallantly repulsed two separate attacks, by which De Grasse hoped to recover his lost anchorage ground. But Hood could only delay, he could not prevent, the surrender of the settlement; and the small islands of Nevis and Montserrat soon followed; so that of the entire Leeward cluster Barbadoes and Antigua only remained in British hands.

Only a few days, however, from the capitulation of St. Kitt's, the British fleet was cheered by the return of Rodney. He came out from England with recovered health, and most eager to engage. "I will bring you back a present of De Grasse," —such were his words at parting to a private friend. He came out also with the fullest confidence of the administration. "The fate of this empire is in "your hands," wrote to him Lord Sandwich, "and "I have no reason to wish that it should be in "any other."*

Another disappointment to the English Ministry, though rather at an earlier period, came from the Cape of Good Hope. Against the Dutch settlement in that quarter there had been despatched from England an expedition, under General Meadows and Commodore Johnstone. The Dutch settlement was, however, secured by the timely arrival of the Bailli de Suffren with his fleet, on his way to the East Indies; and the British officers were reduced to an attempt upon some Dutch merchant-ships that lay at anchor in Saldanha Bay, about fourteen

* Life of Lord Rodney, by Mundy, vol. ii. pp. 170—182.

leagues to the northward of Cape Town. The enterprise was successful, and several prizes were made; but they could afford no equivalent for the frustration of the design upon the Cape. CHAP. LXV. 1782.

But all other disappointments—since Lord Cornwallis's at least—were cast into the shade by the loss of the island of Minorca. General Murray had continued to maintain St. Philip's Castle with the greatest gallantry. Thus, on one occasion, by a sudden and well-directed sally, he had surprised and chased the Duke de Crillon from his head-quarters at Cape Mola. But besides the havoc of war, our soldiers were laid low by diseases—not putrid fevers only, but scurvy and dysentery had set in among them. It was found that their zeal often rose superior to their strength. We are told of several soldiers who died on guard; their generous ardour to defend the place having made them hide their sickness to the last, and kept them from the hospitals. In the beginning of February there remained less than 700 fit for duty; and even of these five-sixths were already tainted with the scurvy. The General having left nothing that valour or skill could do untried, found it necessary to capitulate on the 5th of the same month. The troops felt that sickness, and nothing but sickness, had subdued them, and were heard to exclaim with honourable indignation as they marched to lay down their arms, that they surrendered them to God alone. They obtained not merely all the honours of war by the articles of capitulation,

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but moreover, as Murray gratefully acknowledged, the most kind and considerate treatment from the free will of their gallant enemy.* And thus was the best harbour of the Mediterranean lost to England.

Meanwhile the campaign in the House of Commons was full as eagerly pursued. Before the close of January, Fox, in a most noble speech, complained of the ill success of our naval forces, and ascribed it solely to Lord Sandwich. Early next month he brought these charges to a vote, when the Government prevailed against him by a majority of only twenty-two. A fortnight afterwards Fox renewed the same motion in another form; when, in a fuller House, the Ministerial majority dwindled to nineteen. But there now stepped forward, as the principal assailant of Lord North, a member far indeed below Fox in ability and eloquence, but as greatly his superior in age, in experience, in disinterested views. This was General Conway. Much as he had failed as a leading Minister some years before, it was not forgotten that he had been the person to propose the repeal of the obnoxious Stamp Act; and he enjoyed high respect on all sides as a gallant soldier, as a high-minded and accomplished gentleman.† On the 22nd of Fe-

* General Murray's despatch of Feb. 16. 1782. See also the Ann. Regist. for that year, p. 216., and Coxe's Bourbon Kings of Spain, vol. v. p. 105.

† The politics of Conway, though at all times rather vague, are described as this time by his close friend Horace Wal-

bruary, the next sitting of the House after the Navy debate, he moved an Address to the King entreating His Majesty "that the war on the Continent of "North America might no longer be pursued for "the impracticable purpose of reducing the inhabi- "tants of that country to obedience." In reply, or rather explanation, the new Secretary of State, Mr. Welbore Ellis, made a most ambiguous statement of his views, giving Burke some reason to exclaim that only the person and not the system had been changed; and at last, with all the exertions of the Ministers, they only prevailed by a melancholy majority of one, the numbers being for the motion 193, and against it 194.

No sooner were these numbers announced than Fox rose to taunt Lord North with delay in bringing forward his Budget for the year. Being answered that the business was fixed for the 25th, Colonel Barré next inveighed against the Minister for bringing it forward at all. An angry scene ensued. Barré, besides calling Lord North "the "scourge of his country," applied to his conduct the epithets of "indecent and scandalous," and Lord North retorted with "insolent and brutal." The Speaker interposed, and both the Members begged pardon.

pole: "He had never engaged in any concert or councils with "Lord Rockingham, and if he leaned to any faction by ties "it was to the Duke of Grafton, who chose him into Parlia- "ment, and who adhered to Lord Shelburne." (Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 449.)

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On the 25th, according to his promise, Lord North made his financial statement, and explained the terms on which a new loan of 13,500,000*l.* had been contracted. Whatever the terms might be, there was no doubt as to their ill reception. Whatever the terms might be, Fox was sure to start up, as he did, with accusations of the Minister — that he had brought the country to the eve of bankruptcy — that he had made a corrupt bargain — that from the public revenue he reserved DOUCEURS for contractors, placemen, and members of Parliament.

On the 27th General Conway, encouraged by the nearly equal numbers on his first motion, brought forward a second to the same effect, but in another form — a Resolution against any further attempts to reduce the insurgent Colonies. On this occasion the Ministers did not venture upon open or direct resistance. Lord North only pleaded for a short delay to convince the House that Ministers were sincere in their intention not to recruit the army in America; and Wallace, the Attorney-General, declared himself ready with a Bill enabling the Government to treat with the revolted Colonies on the basis of a truce. On these grounds Wallace moved that the debate should be adjourned. Nevertheless, so strong was now the tide setting in against the war in North America, that Conway's Resolution was carried against the whole force of Government by 234 against 215.

The Resolution thus carried, being sent up

to the King through an Address, received from His Majesty an assenting but a cold and guarded reply. Upon this, General Conway followed up his advantage by moving on the 4th of March a new Address to inform the Sovereign that the House would consider as enemies to the King and country all those who should advise the further prosecution of offensive war in North America. Lord North declared the motion unnecessary, but did not venture to divide the House against it. Rigby, incited beyond all bounds at the thought of losing office after so many years of happy tenure, attacked the Opposition with great warmth, but was sternly rebuked by Pitt, and told that the nation was weary of paying him. "Undoubtedly," thus answered the veteran jobber, "I am not tired "of receiving money; but am I to be told that "because men receive the emoluments of office, "they are the authors of our ruin?" Finally, after long debate but no division, the new Address was passed.

Not deterred by these heavy blows on the administration, the Attorney-General rose next day to explain the details of his Bill for Peace. "The "only proper way," said Fox, "of treating such a "proposition from such a quarter would be to "burst out a laughing, and then walk out of the "House!" Fox then proceeded to inveigh against the Ministers in terms which, standing as they do on record, should certainly have had some influence, however slight, on his own conduct next year.

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"From the moment," he cried, "when I shall "make any terms with one of them, I will rest "satisfied to be called the most infamous of man- "kind. I could not, for an instant, think of a "coalition with men who in every public and "private transaction, as Ministers had shown them- "selves void of every principle of honour and "honesty. In the hands of such men I would not "trust my honour even for a minute!" Who could have expected after such words as these to see, but twelve months later, Lord North side by side with Fox as Cabinet colleagues and familiar friends?

Flushed with their recent victory, the Opposition had determined to strike another and yet another blow until they finally prevailed. On the 8th of March, Lord John Cavendish brought forward a string of Resolutions ascribing all our losses to want of foresight and ability in Ministers. But he was disappointed in the issue, since he found a majority of ten against his motion. This debate, which turned, in a great measure, on the expected change of Government, is mainly remarkable for the declaration which it drew from Pitt. "For "myself," he said, "I cannot expect to take any "share in a new administration; and were my "doing so more within my reach, I never would "accept a subordinate situation." So lofty an announcement from a stripling of twenty-three—from a young lawyer just beginning to go the Western

Circuit—might startle by its boldness, but was justified by his genius.

On the 15th the attack on the administration was renewed by Sir John Rous, one of the members for Suffolk, a Tory on principle, as he avowed, and up to this time a firm supporter of Lord North. It was therefore with the greater weight that this independent country gentleman now came forward with a direct vote of No Confidence. In the debate which followed, great merriment was caused by one Member's—Sir James Marriott's—pedantic folly. Desiring to afford a technical proof of the justice of the war, he observed that, even if Representation were held necessary to give the right of Taxation, America was already represented in the British Parliament. "She is represented," said Sir James, "by the Members for the county of "Kent, since in the Charters of the Thirteen Pro-"vinces they are declared to be part and parcel of "the Manor of Greenwich." Yet, though Sir James Marriott was the Parliamentary assertor of this singular argument, the honour of its original invention seems rather to belong to Mr. George Hardinge.* Well might Lord North have exclaimed on this occasion: "Save me, oh! save me "from my friends!"

The division upon Sir John Rous's motion left the Ministers with a bare majority of nine. Nor had their majority only diminished in amount, it

* Compare the Parl. Hist., vol. xxii. p. 1184., with Lord Campbell's Lives of the Chancellors, vol. v. p. 352.

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had changed in quality; it had ceased to be any token of public feeling in their favour. Their numbers were now, in great measure, derived from merely Nomination seats. Take, for example, the very strong-hold of the smaller boroughs in that age. The two members for the county of Cornwall voted against Lord North, but of its borough representatives who took part in this division, there were eight opponents, and no less than thirty supporters of the Government.

While the minority on Sir John Rous's Resolution were still waiting in the lobby, Fox announced to them that, if unsuccessful then, a new motion to the same effect would be made on the Wednesday following, the 20th of the month. Lord Surrey was the orator intended. But for some time past it had been manifest — and to none more clearly than to Lord North — that although the downfal of the Ministry might be a little delayed, or a little quickened, it could not, at that juncture, be averted. With honest zeal he had been striving to reconcile the King's mind to this unavoidable necessity. On the 10th, at last, His Majesty agreed that the Chancellor should see Lord Rockingham, and learn from him on what terms he might be willing to construct another Ministry. Lord Rockingham's demands were found to be, that a Ministry should be formed on the basis of peace and economy, and that three Bills, namely, Sir Philip Clerke's on Contractors, Mr. Burke's on Economical Reform, and Mr.

Crewe's on Revenue Officers—should be made Government measures. To the basis Thurlow offered no objection, but he would by no means consent to the three Bills. At last, in a final conference with Rockingham, the Chancellor broke off in much wrath, declaring (and with many an oath, no doubt,) that he would have no further communication with a man who thought the exclusion of a contractor from Parliament, and the disfranchisement of an exciseman, of more importance than the salvation of the country at this crisis. "Lord Rockingham," added he, "is "bringing things to a pass where either his head "or the King's must go, in order to settle which "of them is to govern the country!" *

Scarcely less ardent were, at one time, the feelings of the Sovereign himself. He contemplated, with the utmost aversion, his return to the oligarchy of the great Whig Houses. He had even some design of taking his departure for Hanover if the terms required of him should be altogether irreconcileable with his sense of right. Such a design had once before arisen in his mind in the midst of the Gordon riots. We now find a mysterious hint of it in his letters to Lord North; and it is certain, writes Horace Walpole, that for a fortnight together the Royal yacht was expediting and preparing for his voyage. What further steps His

* See the Extracts from Mr. Adam's MSS., published by Lord John Russell in his Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 294.

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Majesty may have had in view, — whether his recession was to be permanent or temporary, — whether he meant to leave the Queen as Regent or to take her and the Princes with him, — can at present only be surmised.*

It appears, however, that by degrees, the King became more reconciled to the present, or more hopeful of the future. Lord North being with him on the afternoon of the 20th, His Majesty acknowledged that, considering the temper of the Commons, he thought the administration at an end. "Then, Sir," said Lord North, "had I not better "state the fact at once?"—"Well, you may do "so," replied the King. Eager to make use of this permission, Lord North hastened down to the House of Commons in Court dress. He rose to speak at the same moment with Lord Surrey, and neither would give way. Loud were the shouts and cries in that thronged House; the one party calling for Lord Surrey, and the other for Lord North. At length, to restore some order, Fox moved "That the Earl of Surrey do first speak." But immediately Lord North, with presence of mind mixed with pleasantry, started up again. "I "rise," he said, "to speak to that motion;" and,

* Notes by Horace Walpole, March 18. 1782. According to Henry Richard Lord Holland, who transcribed this passage for the Fox Memorials: "King George the Fourth told me a "story of his father's plan of retiring to Hanover, and described "with more humour than filial reverence his arrangement of "the details, and especially of the liveries and dresses."

as his reason for opposing it, stated that he had resigned, and that the Ministry was no more. Next, in some farewell sentences, he proceeded, with excellent taste and temper, to thank the House for their kindness and indulgence, and he would add, forbearance, during so many years. And finally, to leave time for his successors, he proposed and carried an adjournment of some days. CHAP. LXV. 1782.

There was on this occasion another slight but characteristic incident which more than one eye-witness has recorded. It was a cold wintry evening, with a fall of snow. The other Members, in expectation of a long debate, had dismissed their carriages. Lord North, on the contrary, had kept his waiting. He put into it one or two of his friends, whom he invited to go home with him; and then, turning to the crowd chiefly composed of his bitter enemies, as they stood shivering and clustering near the door, he said to them with a placid smile — "You see, gentlemen, the advantage of "being in the secret. Good night."—"No man," says Mr. Adam of his speech and whole conduct that evening, "ever showed more calmness, cheer-"fulness, and serenity. The temper of his whole "family was the same. I dined with them that "day, and was witness to it."

Thus ended Lord North's administration of twelve years. It is certainly strange on contemplating these twelve years, to find so many harsh and rigorous measures proceed from the most gentle and good-humoured of Prime Ministers. Happy

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had but greater firmness in maintaining his own opinions been joined to so much ability in defending opinions even when not his own!

Even as to the disasters and miscarriages, however, which could not be denied in this administration, the friends of Lord North contended that, in truth, he was not answerable for them. The points in his favour were argued with great spirit only a few days before his fall, by Mr. George Onslow, in the House of Commons. Why, said Mr. Onslow, have we in this war against America such ill success? Mainly, he continued, from the support and countenance given in that House to American rebellion. The army of Washington had been called by Opposition "our army;" the cause of the Americans had been called "the "cause of Liberty;" and one gentleman (this was Burke), while lavishing his praises on Dr. Franklin and Mr. Laurens, had declared that he would prefer a prison in company with them to freedom in company with those who were supporting the cause of England. But this vindication, though spirited, nay though true, is faulty, because, though true, it is not the whole truth, — because it overlooks what no statesman should, the certainty that when free principles are at stake dissensions will always arise in a free country.

On viewing the two principal parties then in conflict, — Lord North's and Lord Rockingham's, — we can scarcely call either generous and large-minded on every point, and so far as regards

both men and measures. Lord North's party had some narrow views of national policy, but it freely welcomed to its high places high ability, however unconnected. Lord Rockingham's, on the contrary, was more liberal in its political opinions, but as to men of genius, if low-born, it would receive them only as its servants and retainers; it almost avowedly regarded power as an heir-loom in certain houses.*

Lord Rockingham's personal deficiencies must also at such a crisis be lamented. His high character, distinguished by honour and integrity, was not free from the alloy of vehement party-spirit, and was not supported by even the semblance of ability. How far the best judges deemed him fitted for official labour may be seen from this one fact, that Lord Chatham, if called upon to form an administration in 1778, had designed to propose to him the post of Chamberlain.† Lord Rockingham's own description of himself is scarcely more encouraging. Thus in 1766, did he write to a friend:— "The continual hurry from the late occasion occu- "pies my mind so much that I can hardly remem-

* It is remarkable how far in the old Whig party such exclusiveness had become an article of faith. Thus writes Thomas Moore, as the result of some private lectures which he had heard: "A few Whig families are our only security for the "Constitution. The Duke of Devonshire, &c." (Diary, May 30. 1819, vol. ii. p. 316. ed. 1853.)

† Notes by Mr. Eden, in March 1778, as published in the Memorials of Fox, vol. i. p. 183.

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"ber any thing." * This was in his first administration, when his mind was at its best, but in his second, though but fifty-two years of age, his health and strength were even at the outset much impaired.

It was not, however, to Lord Rockingham that the King in the first instance applied. On the day after Lord North's public resignation, His Majesty sent for Lord Shelburne and offered him the lead of the new Ministry. Lord Shelburne, who was bound by his engagements to Wentworth House, honourably refused the tempting prize. Thereupon, after one more as ineffectual offer to Lord Gower, the Premiership reverted to Lord Rockingham, although to spare the King's feelings the earlier communications still passed through Lord Shelburne's hands. But this course, though it might be useful as regards the Royal sensibilities, had, on the other hand, the ill effect of arousing or confirming Rockingham's jealousy towards his coadjutor. Thus, when Shelburne had obtained from the King a peerage for Mr. Dunning, Rockingham felt it incumbent upon him as a counterpoise to insist upon the same favour for Sir Fletcher Norton. In this manner did Dunning become Lord Ashburton, and Norton, Lord Grantley.

Within a week the new Cabinet was formed. Rockingham became First Lord of the Treasury, with Lord John Cavendish as Chancellor of the

* Letter to Charles Yorke, Jan. 11. 1766, printed in the Memoirs by Lord Albemarle, vol. i. p. 267.

Exchequer; Admiral Keppel, now raised to the rank of Viscount, First Lord of the Admiralty; the Duke of Richmond, Master General of the Ordnance; and Mr. Fox, Secretary of State. These five — all of most unexceptionable pedigrees — were strictly of the Rockingham section; but the five next members of the Cabinet had been followers of Chatham. These were Lord Shelburne as the other Secretary of State, the third or American Secretaryship being now abolished; Lord Camden, President of the Council; the Duke of Grafton, Privy Seal; General Conway, Commander in Chief; and Lord Ashburton, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. Thus then the Cabinet consisted of five Rockinghams and five Shelburnes, while, as if to hold the balance between these equal numbers there was a high Tory Chancellor, Lord Thurlow, retaining the Great Seal!

A general and a just surprise was caused by this last arrangement. No doubt it gratified the King, but such was not probably Rockingham's chief motive in making it, since His Majesty's pleasure was by no means much consulted in the other offices. So far indeed was the contrary notorious, that Lord North made it the subject of one of his good-humoured jests. "I was abused," he said, "for lying Gazettes, but there are more lies in this "one than in all mine. 'Yesterday His Majesty "'WAS PLEASED to appoint the Marquis of Rock-"'ingham, Mr. Charles Fox, and the Duke of

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"'Richmond.'" * We may rather therefore ascribe the continuance of Thurlow to the jealousy of the two sections in the Cabinet, lest either Dunning from the one side or Norton from the other should obtain the great law-prize. It had already been declined by Camden in consideration of his own advancing years.

Burke, as has been seen, was not admitted to the Cabinet. In a letter hitherto unpublished, he refers to his position at this time in a tone of great mortification, but with a kind of proud humility: "You have been misinformed. I make no part of "the Ministerial arrangement. Something in the "official line may possibly be thought fit for my "measure." † Burke became Paymaster of the Forces, and was further gratified by a small appointment to his son. Barré was Treasurer of the Navy, Thomas Townshend Secretary at War, and Sheridan Under Secretary of State. Kenyon was Attorney, and John Lee, Solicitor General. Henry Dundas continued in office as Lord Advocate. More than one of the smaller posts was tendered to the choice of Pitt, especially that of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, which it was thought would be the more acceptable to him as it had been formerly held by his father.‡

* Memoirs by Lord Albemarle, vol. ii. p. 467.

† Original MS. in my possession, dated March 25. 1782. He is writing to an applicant for place, but the name does not appear.

‡ This offer is stated, probably from Mr. Pitt's own information, in his Life by Bishop Tomline, vol. i. p. 66. ed. 1821.

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Yet it is hard to believe such offers real and sincere, since scarcely three weeks before, Pitt had publicly declared in the House of Commons that he would never accept a subordinate place in any new administration.

No sooner were the new Ministers appointed, than important and difficult questions pressed upon them for decision. Of these none was more important and more difficult, or, as it proved, more pressing in point of time, than that of Ireland. But here some account, which I have purposely reserved till now, of the transactions in that kingdom during the few last years, will be required.

The demands of Ireland were caused, or at least hastened, by the offers to America. When in the spring of 1778, Lord North had proposed and carried through his Conciliatory Propositions to Congress, it was not long ere he received a despatch upon the subject from John Hobart, Earl of Buckinghamshire, at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. "I have been pressed," said his Excellency, "by many of His Majesty's principal servants and "other gentlemen, who have uniformly and steadily "supported His Majesty's measures in Parliament, "to lay before your Lordship their humble hope "and their earnest request that whatever privileges "or advantages in trade shall be granted to the "Colonies, if the Conciliatory plan shall take effect, "may be extended to Ireland, and that the Colo-"nies may not in any respect be put upon a better

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"footing than Ireland." * This request was too obviously reasonable and too strongly backed to be resisted by the Government. Propositions were accordingly laid before the British House of Commons for the relief, and, as it were, enfranchisement, of the Irish trade. With the noblest public spirit Burke gave his zealous support to these proposals, though directly against the wishes and instructions of his constituents at Bristol. But here again Lord North's want of energy and of fixed purpose wrought evil. He gave way far too readily to the opposition which these proposals provoked in Parliament, and to the numerous petitions against them which came in from divers parts of England. In the result, therefore, most of the advantages designed for Ireland came to be relinquished; only some relief being given to the linen trade, and some openings allowed in the African and West Indian commerce.

Meanwhile, there was carried through the Irish Houses a Bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics, similar to the Act upon the same subject which passed in England that year. There was also carried in Ireland a Bill for the national defence, by the establishment of a Militia in that kingdom. The Parliament and people seemed for the time contented. But next year, when it plainly appeared how small were the commercial concessions made in England, and that no more were

* The Lord Lieutenant to Lord North, March 20. 1778. Life of Grattan, by his Son, vol. i. p. 298.

intended, the murmurs of the Irish rose. The merchants of Dublin, meeting in the Tholsel, expressed their resentment at "the unjust, illiberal, "and impolitic opposition of many self-interested "people in Great Britain." Hence they bound themselves, until a better policy should prevail, neither directly nor indirectly to import or use any British goods which could be produced or manufactured in Ireland. In this Non-Importation agreement they were following the significant example of America; and they were followed in their turn by several counties and towns in Ireland, as Cork, Kilkenny, and Roscommon.

It must be acknowledged of the Irish people at that juncture, that their distresses were most real, and their complaints well founded. Besides the customary restraints upon their commerce, an embargo had been in force ever since 1776. Thus their great staple commodities of beef and butter were shut up and perishing in their warehouses, lest they should serve to supply the enemy; while at the same time, the linen, their great and only free manufacture, was contracted under the fatal blight of the North American war.* Other causes of distress, though kept out of view by the Irish landlords, are recorded on at least as good authority. Thus writes the Lord Lieutenant: "The great "leading mischief is the rise of rents, the "whole of which advance is in addition to the

* Ann. Regist. 1779, p. 123. See also Hardy's Life of Lord Charlemont, vol. i. p. 387.

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"former remittance drawn from hence by those "persons of property who never reside here." *

Another train of events at the same juncture brought the patriots a large accession of strength in urging their demands. By the calls of the American war the country had been stripped of troops. From the want of compulsory clauses, the Militia Act had remained a dead letter. Thus, when a French invasion seemed to be impending, the kingdom was found almost entirely defenceless. When there came intelligence, official, though unfounded, that the enemy meditated an attack upon the north, — when, in consequence, the people of Belfast and Carrickfergus asked of the Government to send some force for their protection, —the Government at Dublin could not at the time spare them any greater force than sixty troopers.† It was natural then that the people of Belfast and Carrickfergus, loyal as they were, should endeavour to protect themselves. They took up arms, and formed themselves into two or three companies. The spirit spread; and thus by degrees through all parts of Ireland, but more especially in Ulster, there arose independent companies of Volunteers. In May, 1779, they were already computed at upwards of ten thousand in number.‡ Many of the chief men in the country appeared at their head,

* To Lord Weymouth, May 29. 1779.

† The Lord Lieutenant to Lord Weymouth, May 24. 1779.

‡ See Lord Rockingham's speech in the House of Lords. (Parl. Hist. vol. xx. p. 646.)

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as the Earl of Clanricarde in Connaught, and the Earl of Charlemont in Ulster. They chose their own officers, and though claiming arms, as Militia, from the Government stores, were in no degree subject to the Government control.

These irregular proceedings caused great perplexity in England. To defend the country from invasion was, of course, not only excusable, but praiseworthy, but, on the other hand, it was clearly both unconstitutional and dangerous to meet in arms without any direction from the Crown. On the whole, then, as soon as the immediate alarm of an invasion passed away, the Secretary of State, writing of the Volunteer Companies, instructed the Lord Lieutenant, "that they be discouraged "by all proper and gentle means."* But this order, so far at least as regarded success in its result, was far more easy to give than to obey. All the little delicate means of hinting and implying, without in set terms expressing, disapprobation, fell unheeded on dull and reluctant ears, and the Volunteers continued to grow both in numbers and in fame. Before the end of 1779, they might boast that they were not far short of 50,000 strong.

Under such circumstances did the Irish Parliament meet again in October, 1779. The prospects of "the Castle" were dark and lowering; those of the Opposition never yet so bright. They had now something better than party spirit to support

* Lord Weymouth to Lord Buckinghamshire, June 7. 1779.

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them. They had a pressing grievance, they had a popular cause. They wanted but an able leader; and such a one they found in Mr. Grattan.

Henry Grattan was born in 1746. His father was a lawyer of some note; during many years both Recorder of, and Member for, the city of Dublin. Young Grattan being designed for the same profession, was entered at the Temple. Looking back in later life to his residence in London, he reverts with especial pleasure to the opportunities which he enjoyed of hearing Chatham in the House of Lords. He has left a vivid description of that great orator, and there is one of his remarks, written long after the event, which, considering his own control of popular assemblies, and his own influence on popular opinion, seems deserving of peculiar weight. "If he (Lord "Chatham) had come into power in 1777, I think "he could have kept America. To him it was "possible; to Lord North it certainly was not." *

From an early age did Grattan apply himself to the practice of oratory. But so singular even then were his manners, that his landlady in England requested of his friends that he might be taken away. For the gentleman, she said, is used to walk up and down the garden most of the night, talking to himself; and though alone, he is addressing some one on all occasions by the name of "Mr. "Speaker;" so that he cannot possibly be in his right mind!

* Life of Henry Grattan, by his Son, vol. i. p. 237.

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On returning to Dublin, Mr. Grattan began to practise as a barrister, but met with no great success. Success, indeed, by his own account, he seems to have neither desired nor deserved. Here are his own words to a friend: "I am now called "to the Bar without knowledge or ambition in my "profession. The Four Courts are of all places "the most disagreeable. My purpose is undeter- "mined, — my passion is retreat. I am resolved "to gratify it at any expense. There is certainly "repose, and may be an elegance in insignificance."*

In 1775 Grattan entered the Irish House of Commons, as Member for the borough of Charlemont, and through the friendship of the Earl of that name. At first he was not much distinguished. But the opportunity was coming which would give his genius full play, and entitle his name for ever to the reverent recollection of his countrymen. His eloquence may be compared to that of the great orator whom he had so often heard and so much admired — Lord Chatham. On one point indeed they were most unlike. So skilled was Chatham in all the graces of action and address, that those very graces have sometimes been urged against him in reproach. The exact reverse was the case with Mr. Grattan. Thus speaks of him one of his contemporaries in his latter days:—"Grattan," says Lord Byron, "would have been near it (a great "orator) but for his Harlequin delivery. . . .

* Letter to Mr. Broome, Feb. 24. 1772, as published in Grattan's Life.

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"Curran used to take him off, bowing to the very "ground, and thanking God he had no peculiarities "of manner or appearance, in a way irresistibly "ludicrous."* But, on the other hand, his eloquence had many of those lightning flashes, those vehement and empassioned bursts, in which Chatham shone. Like Chatham he was wont to dwell on great principles far rather than on subordinate details. Like Chatham he had a spirit alive to every call of freedom, and chafing, as though instinctively, at every form of oppression or of wrong. There was in him, as in the English statesman, a genuine force and fervour, which, as a rushing torrent, worked out its own way, and which sometimes with the common herd might bear the name of madness. Whenever in debate the occasion was greatest, then were Chatham and Grattan greatest too; then, fearless of the frowns of power, they knew how to embody their bold thoughts in some striking phrase which, as a watchword, flew from mouth to mouth; then did their whole age feel the impress of their resolute will and glowing words.

Grattan was an Irishman most truly and thoroughly; an Irishman in heart, in soul, in mind. With all the quick talents of his countrymen, he had also some of their defects. It is remarkable that in the published collection of his speeches the very first sentence of the very first harangue contains a close approach at least to what we are ac-

* Memoranda by Lord Byron, in Moore's Life, vol. ii. p. 208., and vol. iii. p. 234. ed. 1832.

customed to call an IRISH BULL. "I have entreated your attendance," says he, "that you "might in the most public manner deny the claim "of the British Parliament, and with one voice lift "up your hands against it!"* There may also be ascribed to him some of that straining at effect — that unwillingness to say a plain thing in simple terms — that vehement exaggeration both in sentiment and style — by which the genius of his countrymen is but too often dimmed and marred. Take as one instance, out of many, Grattan's words on the French advance upon Moscow: "Ambition is "omnivorous; it feasts on famine, and sheds tons of "blood that it may starve on ice, in order to com-"mit a robbery on desolation."† Thus his eloquence had, perhaps, something of a local tinge, and though thriving and luxuriant in its own land, did not, at least in middle life, bear transplantation to our English soil. His temper, though warm, was generous and manly; he loved, with all his heart, the whole of Ireland, and not merely one of its parties and one of its creeds. To him at least could never be ascribed the fault with which so many of his countrymen are charged; that even within the ranks of the same party they are prone to backbite and revile each other. "I never knew," thus on one occasion spoke King George the Third to an eminent statesman now alive, "I never knew one "Scotchman speak ill of another, unless he had a

* Speech of April 19. 1780.

† Speech of May 25. 1815.

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"reason for it; but I never knew one Irishman "speak well of another unless he had a reason for "it."

The first steps of Grattan's political career were probably much aided by his connexion with a man so highly respected as Lord Charlemont. At the meeting of the Irish Houses in October, 1779, he had ready an Amendment to the Address, claiming "Free Export and Import" as the birthright of an Irishman. But he consented to alter these expressions, after a speech from Henry Flood—already one of the leading members of the Commons, and in after years most conspicuous as his rival and opponent. He saw, as Mr. Flood suggested, that some clearer and shorter words might more powerfully stir the public mind. Therefore, instead of unrestricted Export and Import, he put forth a phrase of which in our own time we have once more felt the force and power—"Free Trade." Against the Address, as thus amended, the Government did not venture to divide. It was carried up to the Lord Lieutenant in state by all the Members. The streets were lined by the Volunteers in full array; they had the Premier Peer of Ireland, the Duke of Leinster, at their head; and amidst loud acclamations from the people, presented arms to the Speaker as he passed along.

Flushed with this success, and finding the King's answer when sent over couched only in vague and general terms, Grattan moved and carried, by a large majority, a Resolution: "That at this time it "would be inexpedient to grant new taxes." Next,

in like manner, he carried through a vote giving the Supplies not, as usual, for two years, but for six months only. It is a strong proof of the growing popular enthusiasm, that Grattan found supporters at this time even in the ranks of the administration. Both Mr. Flood, though Vice-Treasurer, and Mr. Burgh, though Prime Sergeant, had spoken in support of his amendment. Mr. Burgh proceeded to a further and far more vehement speech, though well aware that he should lose his office by it. "Talk not to me of peace," he cried. "Ireland "is not in a state of peace; it is smothered war. "England has sown her laws like dragons' teeth, "and they have sprung up in armed men!"

By the lower orders the same spirit was shown. But far less laudably. Some four or five thousand of the Dublin populace rose in riot during the last of these debates, armed with pistols and swords, and calling out for a Free Trade and a Short Money Bill. They stopped the Speaker, Mr. Pery, in his coach, and endeavoured to administer an oath to him that he would vote as they desired. Several other Members were in like manner insulted and mal-treated. Scott, the Attorney-General, was, however, the principal object of their fury: they broke open and sacked his house, and not finding him at home, rushed to the Law Courts in search of him, resolving, as they said, to have his life if they could. The Volunteers are accused of showing no great alacrity to repress these outrages; and when the Attorney-General went down to the

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House of Commons, and complained of the conduct of the people, he found his complaint but coldly received. Mr. Yelverton, in reply, called him "the uniform drudge of every administration," as though that had been a sufficient reason for tearing him to pieces! *

The grievances of Ireland at that time, and for a long time afterwards, were the fault of her laws far more than of her government. Yet the English Opposition — always excepting Burke and some besides — would view them only as affording grounds of crimination on the latter. Before the year 1779 had closed, votes of censure on the Ministers as regarded the state of Ireland were moved by Lord Shelburne in the Peers and by Lord Upper Ossory in the Commons. Lord North prevailed in both by large majorities. He promptly showed, however, that the warning example of America had not been lost upon him. He fixed a day to consider the relief of the Irish people, when he introduced, by a most able and statesmanlike speech, three comprehensive propositions to concede their recent claims and establish their commercial equality. The Bills of Lord North to that effect were carried through at the beginning of 1780, with scarce a breath of dissent, unless from Lord George Gordon, and a few more of the same kind — men despised within the House, and impor-

* Life of Grattan, by his Son, vol. i. p. 401. It is fair to observe, however, that this personal altercation was begun by Scott, who had called Yelverton "the Seneschal of Sedition."

tant only as reflecting some popular prejudices out of doors. CHAP. LXV. 1782.

Such wise concessions — and wiser still had they been earlier — were received as became them by many of the leading men in the Irish Parliament, with expressions of their regard for the British Legislature, and of their loyalty and attachment to the King. Yet this policy was far from producing all the good which was desired and designed. The arguments on the commercial grievances of Ireland had begun to stir the public mind upon another and a kindred question — the legislative supremacy of England. That supremacy depended mainly on two statutes. First, there was the Act passed by a Parliament at Drogheda, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, and called "Poynings's Law," from the name of the Deputy, Sir Edward Poynings. Secondly and chiefly, there was an Act of the British Parliament in the sixth year of George the First. By Poynings's Law all Bills before the Irish Parliament, except only Money Bills, were transmitted to the Privy Council of England, by which they could be either altered or suppressed. By the Act of George the First — a short Act of but two clauses, provoked by some judicial pretensions of the Irish House of Lords — there was asserted in the strongest terms the right of the King, aided by the Lords and Commons of Great Britain, to legislate for Ireland. It was natural for ardent minds, like Mr. Grattan's, to scorn the subordination and dependence which that state of things implied. It

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was natural, also, that they should overlook the manifold perplexities that might flow from entire equality. For supposing one Parliament supreme at Dublin, while another Parliament was supreme for the sister island, what possible security could be framed that, for example, the one Parliament might not vote for peace, while the other was voting for war? Thus the Sovereign, as King of Great Britain, might be waging the fiercest hostilities against France, and yet at the same time, as King of Ireland, might be required to cultivate the most friendly connection with that Power.

Disregarding these contingent dangers, and full of fervour for his native country, Grattan was resolved to bring forward the question of her rights. It might be deemed perhaps imprudent, and certainly ungracious, to urge this new demand so immediately after the concession of the last. Even his friend, Lord Charlemont, here thought him rash and headlong. Even Burke, staunch as he was ever to Ireland, through good report and ill report, wrote at this time a private letter to Dublin which contained these words: "Will no one stop that "madman Grattan?" Still Grattan persevered. On the 19th of April, 1780, he submitted to the House of Commons a motion claiming for Ireland perfect legislative equality with England. His speech on that occasion, according to his own judgment in his later years, was the best that he ever made. It did not, indeed, prevail at the time, but certainly it laid the foundation of subsequent success.

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Other differences with England tended more and more to draw the popular support to Grattan's views. There was a commercial wrangle on the Sugar Duties. There was a Constitutional grievance on the Mutiny Bill. It being found that the Irish magistrates were no longer willing to enforce the British Mutiny Act, it became necessary to pass another in the Irish Parliament, but this was altered by the Privy Council, and its term from limited was made perpetual. The Irish Volunteers, also, by degrees assumed a higher tone. No longer content with separate commanders, they combined in 1781 to elect as their General-in-Chief Lord Charlemont, a man deservedly esteemed on all sides, but far more accomplished than able, and better fitted to adorn than to lead a party. These signs of the times were not lost upon the Government. Instead of the Earl of Buckinghamshire, they sent over the Earl of Carlisle, and provided the new Lord Lieutenant with a most able Secretary in Mr. Eden. But the current of popular opinion in Ireland was rising too high, perhaps, for any man, or body of men, to stem.

Still further stimulated by the tottering state of the Ministry in England, there met at Dungannon 242 delegates, representing upwards of 140 bodies of Volunteers. They held their meeting in the church, and deliberated from noon till eight o'clock in the evening of the 15th of February, 1782. Finally, and without one dissentient, they adopted, among others, the following Resolution,

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which Grattan had prepared: "That a claim of "any body of men other than the King, Lords, "and Commons of Ireland, to bind this kingdom, "is unconstitutional, illegal, and a grievance." On the 22nd, a motion to the same effect was made by Mr. Grattan in the Irish House of Commons. It was eluded by the skill of the Attorney-General, who asked for further time, but it was virtually carried since it dared not be openly resisted.

Two other circumstances at the same period added greatly to the strength of Grattan. First there was the Government's "unpardonable inatten- "tion," as, writing in confidence, Mr. Charles Sheridan most truly terms it, in including, or suffering to be included, the name of Ireland in no less than five British Statutes passed in the preceding Session. "People here,"—thus continues "Sheridan,—"were ignorant of this till Grattan "produced the five Acts to the House of Com- "mons; one of which Eden had been so imprudent "as to publish in the Dublin Gazette. Previous to "this, the general sense of the country was that "the mere question of right should be suffered to "sleep, provided the exercise of the power claimed "under it should never again be resorted to in a "single instance." *

Another circumstance that gave fuel to Grattan's fire was the co-operation of the Roman Catholics. A Bill for their further relief, introduced by Mr.

* Letter to his brother, Richard Brinsley; dated Dublin, March 27. 1782.

Gardiner, was at this time pending, and was finally passed. Some of Grattan's principal coadjutors at that crisis—as Lord Charlemont and Mr. Flood—were not favourable to these claims. It was in spite of these gentlemen, or rather without their knowledge, that Grattan at the last moment sent down to the Delegates at Dungannon another Resolution which, on his authority, they passed, declaring that they rejoiced in the relaxation of the Penal Laws against their fellow subjects. And on the 20th of February, only two days before his great motion upon Irish Rights, Grattan rose in the House of Commons to support Mr. Gardiner's Bill. "I give my consent to it," he said, "because "as the mover of the Declaration of Rights, I "should be ashamed of giving freedom to but six "hundred thousand of my countrymen, when I could "extend it to two millions more." These were noble words, and they had a just reward. Not merely one Irish sect or section, but all Ireland espoused the Irish claims.

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With these reconciled millions at his back, and faltering foes before him, Grattan eagerly pressed on. In the course of March he gave notice of another motion bringing the whole matter to an issue. He fixed it for the 16th of April immediately after the Easter holidays; and to give it additional lustre, he proposed and carried through the House an unprecedented form of summons: "That the Speaker do write Circular Letters to "the Members, ordering them to attend that day

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"as they tender the rights of the Irish Parliament." Thus, as it chanced, the affairs of Ireland were approaching their most decisive crisis at the very time when from other causes Lord North's administration fell.

Ireland at that time needed beyond all question, for its Lord Lieutenant, a great statesman. The new Whig administration sent thither only a great Duke. They selected His Grace of Portland, not for ability, not for activity, not for knowledge, not for eloquence, for of all these he was utterly destitute, but for his rank and wealth, and above all, as the head of one of their principal "Revolution Families." Horace Walpole has in the following words described his previous career: — "He has lived in Ducal dudgeon with half a "dozen toad-eaters secluded from mankind be"hind the ramparts of Burlington wall; and over"whelmed by debts without a visible expense of "2000*l.* a year."* As Secretary, went Colonel Richard Fitzpatrick, a frank soldier, an alert clear-headed man of business, and a devoted follower of Fox.

While these new appointments were in progress, the late Secretary, Mr. Eden, had come back to England and posted to London in all haste, full of spleen at his own and his chief's recall. On the 8th of April, the day on which the House of Commons met after its adjournment, with the new

* Letter to the Rev. W. Mason, July 10. 1782, published in 1851.

Ministers in their places on their re-election, Eden sprung up, and while questioning the intentions of the Government, described in vehement terms the excited state of Ireland, and concluded by moving for the repeal of the 6th of George the First. In reply to him, rose, for the first time as Minister, Mr. Secretary Fox. He complained, as he most justly might, of the unfairness that the servants of the Crown, only just appointed, should not be allowed even a few days for deliberation on a matter so momentous. According to a contemporary statement, he "overwhelmed Eden with shame — "not with remorse." Certainly, at all events, he compelled Eden to withdraw his motion; but Fox also let fall some expressions that might be taken to denote in general terms his adherence, in theory at least, to the supremacy of England.

At Dublin, this declaration, though eagerly explained away, added not a little to the difficulties of Fox's friends. Fitzpatrick, at his first arrival, had been anxious to seek an interview with Lord Charlemont, and there to plead for delay. But Grattan was determined at all hazards to proceed. When Lord Charlemont came to his bed-side with the proposal for postponement, the sick patriot vehemently shrieked, — "No time! no time!" Thus, the popular chief gave the new Secretary little comfort, nor could he place any especial confidence in his colleagues, the other great officers of State. His own chief, the Duke, was a cypher; of Lord Lifford, and of Mr. Pery, we find him

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write as follows: "The Chancellor, I believe, to "be an honest man, but the Speaker is the most "undisguised rogue I ever met with." *

Intent on his own objects and his country's, — and how seldom are these terms identical in Ireland! — Grattan on the 16th of April, the day he had so solemnly fixed, brought forward his declaration of legislative independence. He had been and was ill; he looked emaciated and careworn; but his words were full of fire, and he seemed to shake off his illness as he rose. His friend Lord Charlemont used often afterwards to say, that if ever spirit could be said to act independent of body, it was on that occasion.† Grattan, with great judgment, treated the question as already carried and determined by the votes of the Irish Parliament, however the English might decide. Here are his own most memorable opening words: "I am now "to address a free people. Ages have passed away, "and this is the first moment in which you could "be distinguished by that appellation. . . . . I "found Ireland on her knees; I watched over her "with an eternal solicitude; I have traced her "progress from injuries to arms, and from arms to "liberty. Spirit of Swift! Spirit of Molyneux! "your genius has prevailed! Ireland is now a "nation. In that new character I hail her, and

* Letter to Mr. Fox, April 17. 1782. (Memorials, by Lord John Russell, vol. i. p. 396.)

† Memoir of Grattan, by Daniel Owen Madden, Esq., p. xxxi. ed. 1847.

"bowing to her august presence I say: ESTO PER- CHAP. LXV.
"PETUA!"

The speech of the Great Commoner (for so at 1782.
that period we may surely term him), concluded with an Address to the Crown, couched in most loyal terms, but declaring in full as peremptory language that no body of men save only the Parliament of Ireland had any authority or power to make laws by which that nation could be bound. Colonel Fitzpatrick, as commander-in-chief on the Ministerial side, found himself wholly unable to bring his forces to the charge. "Debate,"—thus next day he writes to Fox,—"it could hardly be called, "since that implies a free discussion; and upon "this occasion no one man presumed to call in "question a single word advanced by Grattan, and "spoke only to congratulate Ireland on her eman- "cipation, as they called it, and to load the mover "from every quarter of the House with the grossest "and most fulsome adulation." Thus the Address of Grattan was carried in the Commons with triumphant unanimity. The House of Lords came to the same vote; and both Houses then adjourned to await the deliberations of the British Ministry and the proceedings of the British Parliament.

The Ministry in London, and above all Fox and Shelburne as its leading members, considered these events in Ireland with anxious care. In private they were far from approving of entire legislative equality. No doubt they discerned the Constitutional anomalies to which in the course of years it

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must give rise. They foresaw that it must tend either to confusion (as it might), or to corruption (as it did.) Let the supremacy, wrote Lord Shelburne, be where Nature has placed it — that is, he meant, with England.* Yet upon the whole, the Government resolved to concede the claims of the sister island in full. For this determination they appear neither liable to censure nor yet entitled to praise. It is not just to say, with some adherents of Lord North, that the rights of England were perilled through their want of firmness. It is not just to say, with Lord John Russell, that the peace of Ireland was preserved through their virtue and merit.† The truth is, that they did only what any Government of that day must have done. No Cabinet could have stemmed the Irish torrent except (and even then scarcely) the strongest and most powerful; and such a one could not have been formed in 1782 with parties as they then stood, and in the last throes of an unprosperous war. Fox and Shelburne yielded — not for any sordid aim, but for the public peace — against their private convictions.

* See his letter at length in the Life of Grattan, by his Son, vol. ii. p. 292.

† Lord John Russell speaks of "their merit in overcoming "these difficulties (of Ireland), which was mainly effected by "the confidence in their principles and character." (Memorials, vol. i. p. 388.) But hear, on the other hand, their own Irish Secretary lament that no reliance at all was placed upon them: "I complained of the hardship of their (the popular leaders) "giving us no more confidence than they would have done the "late Government had it continued." (Colonel Fitzpatrick to Mr. Fox, April 17. 1782.)

Fox and Shelburne yielded as North or Sackville, had they been in office, must have yielded too.

Under such circumstances, and with such views, Fox rose in the House of Commons on the 17th of May, to acknowledge the rights of Ireland, and to bring in a Bill for the repeal, in express terms, of the 6th of George the First. So strong was the conviction of the public necessity for such a course, that members of all parties concurred, and the repealing Bill passed both Houses, with no division, and with little debate. It was felt, as Fox had said finely and truly, that unwilling subjects are little better than enemies, and that the Irish people must, at all events, and at any price, be reconciled with England. Reconciled indeed they seemed to be as soon as the news of the Ministerial measures arrived in Dublin. The storm that had so lately loured, passed away. Expressions of joy and confidence succeeded. The purse-strings of their House of Commons were unloosed. To show their cordiality to England, they voted 100,000*l.* for the levy of 20,000 seamen.* To show their gratitude to Grattan, they desired to vote the same sum to buy him an estate. That vote, proposed by Mr. Bagenal, would have been most readily carried if Grattan had pleased. Grattan was far

* "A pleasing proof of cordial friendship," writes Lord Rockingham to the Duke of Portland. "We feel in this moment the most pressing want of seamen. It is no secret that "we have now ten ships of the line with scarce a man to put "in them." (Memoirs by Lord Albemarle, vol. ii. p. 477.)

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from rich; he had scarcely, at that time, 500*l.* a year. Yet the first impulse of that most noble-minded statesman — of that "inimitable" patriot, as some of his successors in Ireland have not only called, but found him — was to decline the money altogether. He was with difficulty prevailed upon by his friends to accept one half of it. At the same time he framed the resolution, perhaps more lofty than wise, never, under any circumstances, to take any place or office from the Crown.

The political horizon of Ireland, seldom long free from clouds, was within a few weeks again, though less darkly, overcast. Flood was the rival of Grattan in Parliamentary eloquence, and greatly his superior in years and political standing. He viewed with bitter jealousy the popular gratitude which Grattan had earned, and he strove, not without some success, to turn the tide. He rose in the Irish House of Commons to suggest certain doubts how far the surrender of the English supremacy had been thorough and complete. The mere repeal of a declaratory law, said he, did not affect the principle, but left the law exactly where it stood before. As it happened, there were some events that seemed to give weight to his expressions. There was a silly motion by Lord Abingdon in the English House of Peers. There was a case of appeal from Ireland remaining over in the Court of King's Bench in England. This it was thought could not legally be sent back to Ireland, since it had been brought into the English Court before

the Act of Repeal had passed, and it was accordingly decided by Lord Mansfield in the usual course of law. But at Dublin the cry forthwith arose, that England was resuming her pretensions; and thus, through either idle or interested doubts, —in part by untoward circumstances, and in part by envious surmises,—the old flame burst forth anew. In vain did Mr. Fox declare in the House of Commons (this was in December 1782), that his intention when he proposed the repeal of the 6th of George the First had been to make "a full, "complete, absolute, and perpetual surrender of "the British legislative and judicial supremacy "over Ireland." In the ensuing Session, it was found requisite to quiet the alarms of the sister island by another Act, renouncing all authority over Ireland, whether legislative or judicial, in the most positive terms that language could devise.

Amidst this renewal of the agitation, the popularity of Grattan in some degree, though most unjustly, declined. Several times did it wax and wane again during the remainder of his long career. Yet throughout the whole of it, his stainless character, his eminent abilities, and the remembrance of the great part which he had played in 1782, gained him high and spontaneous tokens of respect. One of these, which I have heard from Sir Robert Peel, will scarcely, perhaps, bear its full significance in the eyes of any not themselves engaged in public life. Sir Robert stated that he had observed during the first years he sat in Par-

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liament, as a proof of the veneration in which Grattan had been held in the Irish House of Commons, that those gentlemen who had been Members of that House with him at Dublin, and who were now again his colleagues in London, always addressed him with a "Sir," as they would the Speaker, or a Royal Duke. That practice, said Sir Robert, was observed even by Lord Castlereagh, though at that time the leader of the House.

CHAPTER LXVI.

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Measures of reform in accordance with previous pledges, claimed the early care of the new administration. They adopted and pressed forward two Bills which had been Mr. Crewe's and Sir Philip Clerke's; the one to prevent revenue officers from voting at elections; the other to prevent contractors from sitting in the House of Commons. Both Bills passed the Lower House with no very considerable opposition; but in the Upper, the Ministers had to combat the sharp, though fruitless resistance of their own colleague, the Lord Chancellor, who not only spoke, but divided the Peers against them.*

Another step in the popular direction, was to expunge from the Journals of the House of Commons the Resolution of 1769, annulling the election of Wilkes. An annual motion to this effect having been renewed by Wilkes himself, and seconded by Mr. Byng, the other Member for Middlesex, the Ministers in general concurred; and

* Lives of the Chancellors, by Lord Campbell, vol. v. p. 548—551.

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although Mr. Fox both retained and expressed his strong objection, a large majority decided against retaining the obnoxious words.

Of much more importance was the measure which Burke had promised on Economical Reform. In the first place, a Message was brought down to both Houses from the King recommending an effectual plan of retrenchment and economy, to be carried through all branches of the Public Expenditure, and to include His Majesty's own Civil List. Lord Shelburne, who moved the Address of Thanks in the Peers, would undertake, he said, to pledge himself, that the present was not as usual a mere Ministerial Address; "it was "the genuine language of the Sovereign himself, "proceeding from the heart."

In the House of Commons, Burke was lavish of his praises. "This," he cried, "is the best of "Messages to the best of people from the best of "Kings!" But though Burke might be blamed for the exuberance of his panegyric, he incurred far heavier censure shortly afterwards by the curtailment of his Bill. When his measure was brought in, it was found to spare several of those institutions against which he had inveighed with the greatest energy two years before. Thus, besides a host of smaller offices, once denounced and now retained, both the Duchies of Cornwall and of Lancaster were left wholly unreformed. Some of these modifications in his original design might no doubt be prompted by Burke's own maturer

thoughts; in others it is probable that he was merely called on to fulfil the decisions of the Cabinet in which he had no share. Here was one of the many evils of excluding that great genius from the Councils of the State.

Among the offices to be abolished by this Bill, was that of the third Secretary of State, or of Secretary of State for the Colonies, which it was thought useless to keep when the Colonies themselves were gone. The Lords of Trade and Plantations, the Lords of Police in Scotland, the principal officers of the Great Wardrobe, and of the Jewel Office, the Treasurer of the Chamber, and the Cofferer of the Household, and the six Clerks of the Board of Green Cloth, were, with other rubbish, swept away. It was provided that no pension exceeding 300*l.* a year, should be granted to any one person,—that the whole amount of the pensions granted in any one year should not exceed 600*l.*,—and that the names of the persons on whom they were bestowed, should be laid before Parliament in twenty days after the beginning of each Session,—until the whole Pension List should be reduced to 90,000*l.* There were also most praiseworthy regulations to secure the Secret Service Money from abuses by limiting its amount, and imposing a strict oath on the Secretaries of State who dispensed it.*

* See the Act 22 Geo. iii. c. 82. In his "Letter to a Noble "Lord," written 1796, Burke forcibly describes the difficulties with which in this Bill he had to struggle. He adds, "I was

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To Burke's high honour, we must add, that he was far from sparing his own office. On the contrary, he brought in a separate Bill to regulate the Paymaster's department, and prevent enormous balances from accumulating in his hands, as had often happened heretofore, to the great profit of the holder of that place. It must likewise be acknowledged that the retrenchments which the main Bill effected, though curtailed, were still considerable; they amounted to upwards of 72,000*l.* a year. These savings were to be partly mortgaged to pay the new arrears upon the Civil List, which fell but little short of 300,000*l.*, and which were at once discharged. On the whole, it was an excellent, as well as comprehensive, measure, and only seemed the contrary from the too loud flourish of trumpets by which it had been heralded, and from the exaggerated expectations which that flourish had raised. This measure dignifying and dignified by the great name of Burke, as it seems to a later age, passed the House of Commons at the time certainly with little or no resistance from his enemies, but with quite as little celebration from his friends. In July it reached the Peers, where Lord Thurlow found great fault with it, and again did his utmost to defeat his colleagues; happily, however, in vain.

It may be observed, that the popular effect and impression of this Bill were still further lessened

"loaded with hatred for every thing that was withheld, and "with obloquy for every thing that was given." (Works, vol. viii. p. 30.)

through the weakness of Lord Rockingham, who, while the measure was still pending, and before therefore its enactments could legally restrain him, consented to grant enormous pensions both to Lord Ashburton and Barré. This last in its gross receipts was of no less than 3,200*l.* a year,—above ten times the amount which, in Lord Rockingham's own judgment as expressed in the new Bill, ought henceforth to be granted to any one person whatsoever! Still worse did this transaction seem when, before the final passing of the Bill, a letter was produced by Lord Shelburne in the House of Peers, showing that the first proposal of this enormous pension had come from Lord Rockingham himself! "I was thus left," wrote Burke, many years later, "to support the grants of a name ever "dear to me against the rude attacks of those who "were at that time friends to the grantees."

Another Bill, which the new Ministers supported, but which had been introduced by Sir Harbord Harbord before their accession to office, was to punish the proved corruption of the borough of Cricklade. In strict conformity with the precedent of Shoreham, it was proposed to extend the franchise from the small town to the neighbouring Hundreds. This measure was opposed with the utmost warmth by the Opposer General Lord Thurlow; Lord Mansfield and Lord Loughborough also spoke against it; nevertheless, it was carried through by large majorities. Cricklade being, like Shoreham, wholly

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venal, both had been much under the control of rich Nabobs; and Mr. Frederick Montagu stated in the House of Commons, that Lord Chatham, on being shown the former Bill, had used this striking phrase: "I am glad to find the borough "of Shoreham is likely to be removed from Bengal "to its ancient situation in the county of Sussex."

But the high authority of Chatham might be pleaded for much more extensive measures of Reform. Often in the House of Lords had he lamented the growing venality of the smaller boroughs, and proposed the immediate addition of a hundred County members. And once in conversing with Lord Buchan (this was in the year 1775), he had ventured to prophesy as follows: — "Before the "close of this century, either the Parliament will "reform itself from within, or be reformed with a "vengeance from without."* Since the meetings of 1780, the question had more than ever stirred the public mind, and it continued to be eagerly pressed forward by the delegates of the associated or petitioning counties. It was on Chatham's son that the conduct of it now devolved. On the 7th of May, Mr. Pitt, seconded by Alderman Sawbridge, brought it forward in the House of Commons. To reconcile, or rather to conceal, the wide differences that prevailed as to any definite or specific plan, the motion of Pitt was only — That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the present state of the Representation of the Commons, and

* See a note to the Parliamentary History, vol. xvii. p. 223.

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to report what steps in their opinion it may be proper to take thereupon.

On this question, the new Ministers were very much at variance. Fox, for example, was its steady friend. The opinions of the Duke of Richmond in its favour were not only eager, but extreme. On the other hand, Lord John Cavendish, as one of his colleagues tells us, was "diffident of the "effect of any Parliamentary Reform." It was caution only that withheld the open expression of the Prime Minister's repugnance.* The effects of this strong disinclination in several of the Rockinghams was apparent on the 7th of May. Pitt urged his motion with great ability; it was supported not less ably by Sheridan and Fox; but Dundas opposed it in a speech abounding both with argument and wit; Burke and Thomas Townshend absented themselves; and the proposal for a Committee was negatived by twenty votes, the numbers being 161 to 141.

It was with some difficulty that Fox had prevailed on Burke to keep aloof on this occasion. But on a later day, when the general question was again incidentally discussed, the member for Malton could no longer be restrained. Then, as Sheridan relates it in a secret letter to Fitzpatrick, "Burke "acquitted himself with the most magnanimous "indiscretion, attacked William Pitt in a scream of

* On Lord Rockingham and Lord John Cavendish in 1780 and 1782, see the Memoirs by Lord Albemarle, vol. ii. pp. 395. and 481.

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" passion, and swore Parliament was and always " had been precisely what it ought to be, and that " all people who thought of reforming it wanted to " overturn the Constitution." *

The debate in which Burke thus unburthened himself, was on Alderman Sawbridge moving to shorten the duration of Parliaments, when a large majority declared against that measure. Another Bill to prevent bribery and expenses at Elections, which was introduced by Lord Mahon and supported by Mr. Pitt, seemed at first to meet with more success. It passed the Second Reading, but in the Committee some of its provisions were deemed unduly severe — the candidate being precluded from defraying the conveyance of the non-resident voters to the poll. Several long debates ensued upon it; but the most stringent of its clauses being negatived, Lord Mahon withdrew the Bill.

All this while the position of Fox as leader had been far from easy to himself. Thus does he describe it in a letter to Fitzpatrick, his most confidential friend: " Our having been beat upon Pitt's " motion will, in my opinion, produce many more " bad consequences than many people seem to sup- " pose. . . . . The very thin attendances which " appear on most occasions are very disheartening " and sometimes embarrassing to me. Upon the " Bill for securing Sir Thomas Rumbold's property " we were only 36 to 33. The Attorney and So-

* Letter, May 20. 1782. Memorials of Fox, by Lord John Russell, vol. i. p. 322.

"licitor General were both against me, and I had "the mortification to depend for support upon the "Lord Advocate and Jenkinson. . . . . I have "given you but a small part of my ill humour "when I have confined myself to the House of "Commons. The House of Lords has been the "most shameful scene you can imagine. The "Duke of Richmond, in points where he was "clearly right, has been deserted by every Minister "present more than once." *

But all these Parliamentary proceedings or Cabinet perplexities, however important in themselves, could only be deemed subordinate to two main objects of the new administration or of any administration at that time in England: — to carry on the war as long as it was necessary, and to conclude a peace as soon as it was possible.

As regards the former, little news of any moment came from North America. There, both parties had continued for the most part at gaze, the English merely holding their strong positions, which the Americans were contented with observing. Early in May, Sir Henry Clinton was at length permitted to retire from his arduous command, which was assumed by Sir Guy Carleton in his place. Sir Guy had received most conciliatory orders from the

* Letter, May 11. 1782. The Bill upon Sir Thomas Rumbold was to restrain him from quitting the kingdom or alienating his property, pending the inquiry respecting his conduct at Madras. It was founded on a precedent in the South Sea case. See Parl. Hist. vol. xxii. p. 1396, &c.

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Rockingham Ministry, and attempted, but in vain, to open a separate negotiation with the Congress. He found both parties more than ever inflamed against each other by an unhappy transaction which had taken place only a few weeks before. Here are the particulars. The American loyalists in arms on the side of England had grievous cause throughout the war to complain of the merciless treatment of such among them as fell into their countrymen's hands. Elsewhere I have cited the sanguinary proverb which it seems was in vogue against them.* It so chanced that while the violent death of one of their own number, Philip White, was freshly rankling in their minds, they made prisoner in the Jerseys Joshua Huddy, a Captain in the service of Congress. Provoked by cruel conduct, they were guilty of an unjustifiable retaliation. A party of them under Captain Lippencot led out Huddy to the heights of Middletown and there hanged him on a tree, affixing on his breast an inscription which concluded with these words: "We "determine to hang man for man while there is a "refugee existing; up goes Huddy for Philip "White!"† Greatly incensed at this outrage, Sir Henry Clinton ordered Lippencot to be arrested and brought to trial for murder. But this course did not satisfy Washington, who wrote to the En-

* See vol. vi. p. 127.

† The entire inscription is given in Ramsay's Hist. vol. ii. p. 289. Consult also the narrative of Mr. Sparks, in his Life of Washington, p. 378.

glish General, insisting that Lippencot should be given up to him for summary punishment. When he found that this demand was not complied with, Washington next announced, that he should select one of the British prisoners as an object of retaliation. He cast lots for a victim, and the lot fell upon Captain Asgill, one of the York-town captives, a young officer only nineteen years of age. In vain did first Sir Henry and then Sir Guy express their utter abhorrence of the act of Lippencot, and their firm determination to exert the laws against him. The difficulty was further increased upon Lippencot's trial, when it was found that he could not, in strict justice, be convicted, as not mainly answerable for his crime. It appeared that he had only acted in conformity with what he believed to be his orders from the Board of Associated Loyalists sitting at New York, with the son of Franklin as their President. The most earnest representations were made in favour of Asgill, but his case remained in suspense for several months. Even after Washington's more noble nature had relented, the majority of Congress were obdurate; and while he inclined to mercy they were still sternly determined upon vengeance. But the mother of Asgill having written a pathetic appeal to the French Ministry wrought upon the kindly feelings of the King and Queen, and obtained a letter from the Comte de Vergennes to Washington, dated the 29th of July, and soliciting the young officer's release. Besides the plea of pity, De Vergennes put forward in some

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slight degree a claim of right. "Captain Asgill," he wrote, "is doubtless your prisoner, but he is "among those whom the arms of the King, my "master, contributed to put into your hands at "York-town." He also thought it necessary to guard against another possible Resolution of the Congress. "In seeking to deliver Mr. Asgill from "the fate which threatens him, I am far from en- "gaging you to select another victim; the pardon "to be perfectly satisfactory must be entire." The progress of the negotiations for peace happily concurred to the same end with these compassionate entreaties, and at last on the 7th of November the Congress came to a vote that Captain Asgill should be set free.*

It was not merely in this case that the patience of Washington was tried by the slowness and unwillingness of Congress. His correspondence at that period teems with complaints,—unheeded complaints, — of his necessities. No measures were taken to maintain the war, if necessary, for another year, or to satisfy the troops, who murmured and sometimes mutinied from their long arrear of pay. In like manner they were left almost destitute both of clothing and of food. It is hard to say, whether

* In the Ann. Regist. 1783, p. 241., will be found the letters of Lady Asgill and of the Comte de Vergennes. The former might well indeed have melted a much harder nature than Marie Antoinette's. "My husband (Sir Charles) given over by his "physicians a few hours before the news arrived, and not in "a state to be informed of the misfortune; my daughter seized "with a fever and delirium, raving about her brother; &c."

the southern army under General Greene, or the northern under General Washington, endured the most. Thus writes Greene: "For upwards of two "months more than one-third of our men were "entirely naked, with nothing but a breech-cloth "about them, and never came out of their tents; "and the rest were as ragged as wolves. Our "condition was little better in the article of provi- "sion. Our beef was perfect carrion, and even bad "as it was we were frequently without any." Thus writes Washington: "It is vain, Sir, to suppose "that military men will acquiesce contentedly in "bare rations, when those in the civil walk of life, "unacquainted with half the hardships they endure, "are regularly paid the emoluments of office. Only "conceive then the mortification they must suffer, "even the General Officers, when they cannot "invite a French officer, a visiting friend, or a tra- "velling acquaintance to a better repast than stink- "ing whiskey hot from the still, and not always "that, and a bit of beef without vegetables will "afford them. . . . . I could give anecdotes of "patriotism and distress which have scarcely ever "been paralleled, never surpassed, in the history of "mankind. But you may rely upon it, that the "patience and long-sufferance of this army are al- "most exhausted, and that there never was so "great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. It "is high time for a peace!" *

* The letter of Greene (as given in Gordon's History, vol. iv. p. 292.) is dated August 13., and that of Washington to the

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So far indeed had the spirit of discontent spread in the American army, that it was aimed not only at the Congress but at the Republican form of government itself. In the month of May, 1782, Washington received a communication on the part of several of his officers desiring to make him chief of the State, and, if possible, with the title of King. But no feeling of ambition could lure that great and good man from the path of duty. He replied to this overture, that he must view it with abhorrence and reprehend it with severity.*

In the West Indies, Sir George Rodney had come back from England and resumed the chief command. But the shafts of calumny still pursued him from home. The party prejudice against him may be forgiven in a landsman like Burke; less readily in that experienced Admiral to whom the naval administration was entrusted. Lord Keppel, whom we have seen so keenly sensitive to any supposed slight or disparagement to himself, appears to have acted with the coldest disdain, with the most unjustifiable severity towards an officer, it may be said without offence, greatly his superior in professional renown. Not only did he decide on recalling Rodney from the post which he so ably filled, but he

Secretary at War, October 2. 1782. Yet the Secretary at War (General Benjamin Lincoln), writing to Dr. Franklin, in the course of this very autumn, thought himself entitled to state: "We have now a better army in the field than we have had at "any time before during the war. They are well clothed and "in high discipline." See Franklin's Works, vol. ix. p. 413.

* Washington's Writings, vol. viii. pp. 300. and 353.

did so without one expression of kindness or concern; he did so not even in his own hand or name, but in a dry official letter from his Secretary, Mr. Stephens. That letter of revocation bears date the 1st of May. But even before that date Rodney, by the blessing of Providence, had secured to all ages his country's glory and his own, and turned the Rockingham Ministers, however unwillingly, from his contemptuous recall to his promotion and his praise.*

At this time the Comte de Grasse, flushed with the recent reduction of the greater part of the Leeward Islands, was contemplating the more mighty conquest of Jamaica. He had retired to Port Royal in Martinico to collect and refit his naval force, and to take on board 5,000 troops with which he intended to effect a junction off St. Domingo with another Spanish armament. So confident were the Spaniards of success in this combined expedition, that General Galvez appointed to command their share in it, was, before he sailed from the Havanna, addressed in Council as the "Governor of Jamaica." On the other hand, "I am come" — thus wrote Rodney to the real Governor, — "with a spirit "firmly determined to prevent so important a jewel

* The biographer of Rodney (Life by General Mundy, vol. ii. p. 331.) and, after him, the biographer of Keppel (Life by the Hon. and Rev. Thomas Keppel, vol. ii. p. 380.), throw out some surmises that in recalling Rodney Keppel may have acted in obedience to Lord Rockingham, and against his own opinion. But of this plea there is no proof, and were it true, it is no excuse.

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" being wrested from the Crown of Great Britain. . . . . " My fleet," he adds in another letter, " at " present consists of thirty-six sail of the line, " though several of them are in very bad condi- " tion." * He had set cruisers off Port Royal to watch every movement of the enemy, and transmit it by a chain of frigates. On the 8th of April, the signal was accordingly made that the French — they were thirty-three sail of the line — had unmoored and were proceeding to sea. The British fleet was anchored in St. Lucia, but kept in constant readiness; thus in little more than two hours after the signal was received, all our ships were under weigh, standing towards the enemy with all the sail they could crowd. Sir George Rodney in the Formidable was at the head of the main fleet, while a separate division was commanded by Sir Samuel Hood in the Barfleur. It was the evident policy of the British chief to anticipate the junction of the French and Spaniards by forcing on a battle, which for the corresponding reason the French desired to postpone. " They kept at an awful distance," wrote Rodney to his wife. Some foreigner unversed in our common and colloquial phrases might here exclaim that it was the Frenchmen's distance only that could strike his gallant heart with awe!

On the 9th there ensued a partial and indecisive cannonade, by which, however, two of the enemy's ships were much damaged and the rest in some

* To Governor Dalling, March 5., and to Lady Rodney, March 9. 1782.

measure delayed. Next night, one more of their ships was crippled by running foul of another, and produced a fresh delay. Thus, on the evening of the 11th, Rodney was enabled to bring up his fleet so close as to render inevitable for the morrow the conflict which he sought; and the night which ensued, was passed on both sides in anxious preparation.

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It was at seven in the morning of the 12th of April, that the battle began. There was so little wind, that the six hindmost sail of Hood's division were becalmed and unable to come up until almost the end of the conflict; thus, allowing for three of the French disabled, the number of the ships engaging was exactly equal on each side. Rodney, on this memorable day, was the first, not indeed to invent or to devise, but to put in practice, the bold manœuvre known by the name of "breaking the "line." His own ship, the Formidable, led the way, nobly supported by the Namur, the Duke, and the Canada. After taking and returning the fire of one half of the French force, under one general blaze and peal of thunder along both lines, the Formidable broke through that of the enemy. "In the act of doing so" — thus continues an eye-witness of the scene — "we passed within pistol-"shot of the Glorieux of seventy-four guns, which "was so roughly handled that she was shorn of all "her masts, bowsprit, and ensign-staff, but with "the white flag nailed to the stump of one of her "masts, and breathing defiance as it were in her

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" last moments. Thus become a motionless hulk, " she presented a spectacle which struck our Ad- " miral's fancy as not unlike the remains of a fallen " hero; for being an indefatigable reader of Homer, " he exclaimed, that now was to be the contest for " the body of Patroclus." * In that contest a most important advantage was already gained. For the enemy's fleet, being now, as it were, cut asunder, fell into confusion and could not again be combined. The French, however, still fought on with their usual high spirit and intrepidity; nor did the firing cease till sunset, nearly eleven hours from its first commencement. It was stated to Rodney by persons who had been appointed to watch, that there never was seven minutes' respite during the whole engagement, " which I believe," adds Rodney, " was the severest ever fought at sea." At the close of the day, the English had taken five large ships and sunk another, besides two more which Sir Samuel Hood afterwards captured in their retreat. Thronged as were the French vessels with troops, the slaughter on board them was immense. It was computed, perhaps with some exaggeration, that in the two actions of the 9th and 12th together, they had 3000 slain and twice as many wounded; while the loss of the English in all kinds, did not much exceed 900.

* Narrative by Doctor (Sir Gilbert) Blane; Life by General Mundy, vol. ii. p. 230. In the Memoirs of Mr. Cumberland (vol. i. p. 410.) the mention of Patroclus is transferred to Rodney's Captain and friend, Sir Charles Douglas.

In none of the French ships was the loss of men more severe, or the resistance braver, than in the Ville de Paris, where De Grasse himself commanded. That great ship, the pride of the French navy, and conspicuous far and near as overtopping all others in its size, seemed, as Rodney might have said, like one of Homer's heroes in the meaner ranks of war. De Grasse continued to fight long after the fortune of the battle was decided. It was only when the Barfleur, coming up at last, poured in a fresh broadside, and when, as is alleged, there were but three men left alive and unhurt on the upper deck — De Grasse himself being one of the three — that the Ville de Paris struck her flag. "The thrill of ecstasy" — thus writes a by-stander, Dr. Blane, — "that penetrated every British bosom "in the triumphant moment of her surrender, is "not to be described." So high, indeed, was the renown of that great ship, that when a King's messenger brought the news of the battle to Plymouth, some French officers who were going home by a Cartel from that port, would not believe in this the crowning glory of the conflict, and exclaimed, "Impossible! Not the whole British fleet could "take the Ville de Paris!" *

The Comte de Grasse — the first Commander-in-chief of the French by land or sea who had been taken in conflict by the English since Marshal Tallard gave up his sword to Marlborough on the field of Blenheim — came on board the Formidable

* Letter from Plymouth, May 19. 1782.

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as a prisoner on the day after the battle. Conscious of having done his duty, his demeanour was composed and serene. He spoke freely of his own defeat, which he ascribed to the failure of the French Ministers to send him, as they had promised, twelve ships more. From the British chiefs in the West Indies, and afterwards in England, De Grasse received every token of attention and respect. But at home he was disgraced; nay more, as cannot be recorded without pain, not merely his conduct, but even his courage, was denied.*

"It is odd" — thus on the day after the battle writes Rodney to his wife — "but within two little "years I have taken two Spanish, one French, and "one Dutch Admiral. Providence does it all, or "how should I escape the shot of thirty-three sail "of the line, every one of which I believe attacked "me? But the Formidable proved herself worthy "of her name." Such, combined with terms of tenderest affection to his family, were the first effusions in his triumph of that good and gallant heart. Nor was it, we may add, in the hour of battle only, that his high qualities were conspicuous and decisive; not less admirable was his care in the govern-

* "La funeste journée du 12 Avril, 1782, causa d'un bout "de France à l'autre le plus violent désespoir . . . . . Des "épigrammes contre le Comte de Grasse circulaient de bouche "en bouche. Les femmes portaient alors des croix d'or *à la* "*Jeannette;* on en fit d'autres qui furent nommées *à la de* "*Grasse;* les unes avaient *un cœur*, les autres n'en avaient "pas!" (Botta, Guerre d'Amérique, etc., avec les notes de Sevelinges, vol. iv. p. 537.)

ment and right order of his fleet. To these he desired to apply a principle of gentleness, ill understood in his own age, but better appreciated in our's. "I have long experienced" — here are words from one of his despatches — "that where good disci- "pline prevails, there is seldom occasion for punish- "ment." *

To those who love to trace the lesser lights and shades of human character,—and those who do not, will scarce be found thus far among my readers— I shall owe no apology if I venture to record of the conqueror of De Grasse, that even in his busiest hours he could turn some kindly thoughts, not only to his family and friends, but to his dog in England. That dog named Loup, was of the French fox-breed, and so attached to his master, that when the Admiral left home to take the command of his fleet, the faithful animal remained for three days in his chamber, watching his coat and refusing food. The affection was warmly returned. On many more than one occasion we find Rodney write much as follows to his wife: — "Remember "me to my dear girls and my faithful friend Loup; "I know you will kiss him for me." †

By the glorious victory of the 12th of April, the blow designed against Jamaica was wholly turned aside. That great prize the Ville de Paris was

* To the Secretary of the Admiralty, March 5. 1781; Mundy's Life, vol. ii. p. 41.

† Mundy's Life of Rodney, note to vol. i. p. 258.; vol. ii. p. 28, &c.

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freighted with thirty-six chests of money, for the pay and subsistence of the troops in the projected expedition. It so chanced, moreover, that the whole train of field artillery and the battering cannon intended for that service were on board the other captured ships. But further still, the French vessels which had escaped from the action, some greatly damaged, had sought shelter in different ports, and could not be reunited for any common object. Rodney himself, after some pursuit, repaired to the island which he had saved from danger, and found himself welcomed with transports of gratitude and joy. Thence, on receiving the order for his recall, he set sail for England.

The two battles of Rodney may be said to close the naval operations of this year, out of the European seas. For neither the surprise of the Bahama islets by three Spanish ships sent from Cuba, and of the Hudson Bay settlements by a French seventy-four and two frigates under the since celebrated La Perouse; nor yet, on the other hand, the conquest by the English of some forts on the Mosquito shore from the Spaniards, and of some others on the coast of Africa from the Dutch, met with serious resistance, or appear to call for special commemoration. In the middle of May, the intelligence of Rodney's great victory came to England where it produced the highest exultation. It seemed to bring back to our arms their pristine lustre, and to retrieve most worthily a large amount of loss and ill success. So strong was the

tide of gratitude towards the victorious Admiral, as to bear along with it the very Ministers who, not three weeks since, had determined to disgrace him. An English Barony, besides a pension for life, first proposed by Sir Francis Basset, an Opposition member, was bestowed on Rodney, and an Irish Barony on Hood. Yet, in the eyes of the nation, the first reward seemed scarcely adequate for such an exploit. "My own ancestor," observed Lord Sandwich, "was for his services made an Earl, "and Master of the Wardrobe for three lives; "and surely what Sir George Rodney has done "no less merits an Earldom, with an annuity of "two or three thousand pounds a year to be an-"nexed to it. The last action alone deserved so "much."* CHAP. LXVI. 1782.

But the news from the West Indies did not lessen either the popular anxiety or the Ministerial endeavours for peace. The new Government had resolved to carry through its remaining stages the Bill which the last had framed, giving the King full authority to conclude either a peace or truce with the insurgent Colonies, "any law or Act of "Parliament to the contrary in any wise not-"withstanding." The measure passed accordingly, though not with any great despatch; it was not brought from the Commons till the 30th of May,

* Speech in the House of Lords, May 27. 1782. In the report of the Parliamentary History (vol. xxiii. p. 60.) this passage is omitted. In the Commons, Burke, referring to his old St. Eustatia charges, said finely that, if there was a bald spot on the head of Rodney, he was willing to cover it with laurels.

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it did not receive the Royal assent till the 19th of June. But the first step of Mr. Fox in Foreign Affairs was to attempt a separate negotiation with Holland by the mediation of Russia. In this overture he was not successful, although pursuing it to the furthest limits of the national dignity, or even as his opponents might allege, beyond them. "The Dutch" — said Mr. Pitt in his great speech on the peace next year — "the Dutch were not "disarmed by the humiliating language of that "gentleman's Ministry."

It is to be observed, that the new Cabinet found, as had also the preceding one, a disposition to mediate in the Courts both of Petersburg and Vienna. With the former, the original object had been to obtain the cession of Minorca, in return for an active interposition in behalf of England.* Even while that hope was pending, or even after it had ceased through the conquest of that island by France, the Czarina was willing to exert herself, although in vain, to conclude for us a separate treaty with the Dutch.—At Vienna, since the decease of the Empress Queen, in 1780, Prince Kaunitz had been far from friendly in his tone; but he appears to have thought that the importance of Austria would be enhanced by taking a principal part in the negotiations. With this view, on the accession of the new Ministry, he made another offer to mediate,

* See in the Malmesbury Papers especially Sir James Harris's two despatches of Dec. 24. 1780, and Lord Stormont's reply of Jan. 20. 1781.

through a document which was concurred in by the Czarina, and which, in diplomatic phrase, was styled UNE INSINUATION VERBALE. To both the Imperial Courts, the new Ministers gave a cordial and assenting reply. They also attempted, though without effect, to awaken an interest for peace in the mind of the King of Prussia. But it soon became more and more apparent, that the negotiations made no real progress at any of these three Courts, and that Paris was the place, and Franklin the person, at which and through whom a peace must be achieved.

Immediately before the fall of Lord North's Ministry, and in anticipation of that event, Dr. Franklin had written to Lord Shelburne with general expressions of his pacific views. On receiving that letter, Lord Shelburne, then Secretary of State, sent to Paris as his agent, Mr. Richard Oswald, a London merchant well versed in American affairs. Mr. Oswald was furnished with a few lines of recommendation from Mr. Laurens, then a prisoner on parole in England, while Lord Shelburne, in his own letter, described him as a man "conversant in those negotiations which are "most beneficial to mankind," and on that account "preferred to any speculative friends or to "any persons of higher rank." Dr. Franklin readily conferred with Mr. Oswald, and put into his hands a paper drawn up by himself, suggesting, that in order to produce a thorough reconciliation, and to prevent any future quarrel on the North

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American Continent, England should not only acknowledge the Thirteen United States, but cede to them also the province of Canada.* Such a project, though it might prevail on the more simple mind of Mr. Oswald, was not likely to find favour in the eyes of any British statesman. Mr. Oswald, however, undertook to return with it to England, and to lay it before his chief; Dr. Franklin at his departure expressing an earnest hope, that all future communications to himself might pass through the same hands.

Under these circumstances, the Cabinet determined that Mr. Oswald should go back to France, and carry on the treaty with Franklin, though by no means with such concessions as the American philosopher desired. It was laid down as the basis of this negotiation, that the Independence of the United States should be admitted, and that other matters should be restored as they stood at the Peace of 1763. It was also resolved to send another agent to Paris, to treat, on the same basis, with M. de Vergennes; and for this second

* This was no new scheme of Dr. Franklin; we find him so early as October 1778, suggest it in a letter to Mr. Hartley (Works, vol. viii. p. 301.). Lord Shelburne wholly disapproved it; as, notwithstanding some vague surmises to the contrary, is plain from his own "Memorandums" of Instruction to Mr. Oswald, April 28. 1782. The original MS. of these is preserved among the papers at Lansdowne House, and they were first made public by a very accurate and able expositor of this whole transaction, in the Edinburgh Review, No. CCI. p. 35., January 1854.

mission Fox selected his friend Mr. Thomas Grenville.*

It might have been foreseen that, with negotiations so concurrent, the two negotiators must inevitably clash. The letters of Mr. Grenville to Fox were filled with complaints of Mr. Oswald's interposition, and of Lord Shelburne's secret views; and thus was the keenest jealousy fomented between both the holders of the Seals. Yet it does not follow that either Shelburne or Fox was to be blamed. The censure so freely cast on the one or on the other of them may, with far greater justice, be transferred to the system under which they acted. At that time, the old and perplexing division of the Northern and Southern departments, which had prevailed through the earlier portion of the century, was at an end. When the third Secretaryship was abolished, the partition of business between the two remaining Secretaries was made on the same principle as the Home and Foreign Offices of the present day, but with this difference, that the Colonies—and, in the eye of the law, the United States were Colonies still—were added to the Home. Lord Shelburne had been appointed the Home Secretary, and Mr. Fox the Foreign. Thus the negotiation with America was as clearly

* The correspondence of Mr. Thomas Grenville at Paris is given fully in the "Courts and Cabinets of George III." (vol. i. pp. 27—64.), as published in 1853, by the Duke of Buckingham. In Franklin's Works (vol. ix. pp. 238—351., ed. 1844), will be found a clear and excellent Journal of the negotiation, up to the 1st of July, with original letters interspersed.

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in Lord Shelburne's province, as those with France, and Spain, and Holland were in Mr. Fox's.

Such was the state of things at Paris, when the news came of our great victory in the West Indies. Mr. Oswald told Dr. Franklin that, as he thought, some of our Ministers were a little too much elated by it; yet they all hastened to declare that it left their desire for peace entirely unchanged. Franklin, on his part, did his best to inspirit Comte d'Estaing and other naval officers whom he met at dinner, and found in some degree dejected. By way of encouragement, he told them the observation of the Turkish Bashaw, who was taken with his fleet, by the Venetians at Lepanto:—"Ships are like my master's beard; you "may cut it, but it will grow again. He has cut "off from your Government the Morea, which "is like a limb, that you can never recover. "And his words," added Franklin, "proved true."

Of still greater significance in this negotiation, was the illness of Lord Rockingham. He was only fifty-two years of age, yet his health had for some time been declining. He suffered from water on the chest, and was now, moreover, attacked by Influenza; a disorder of recent introduction, but at that period widely prevalent in London.* On

* The first appearance of Influenza in London is described by Lord Chesterfield, in a letter to his son (July 9. 1767). In June 1782, Lady Rodney writes to her husband:—"This disor- "der has been so severe and so universal, that the public places "have been obliged to be shut up."

the last — and indeed as it would seem the only — occasion during his own Ministry when Lord Rockingham took any part in the House of Lords — this was on the 3rd of June — he declared himself so ill "that at times he was not in possession "of himself." Still his friends were under no apprehensions of his danger, till near the end of the month, when he grew much worse, and on the 1st of July he expired.

On the day preceding his decease, the Cabinet having met without him, Fox pressed his colleagues with much eagerness, and for the second time, that in the negotiations at Paris the Independence of America might freely and at once be conceded, even without a treaty for a peace. But the majority of the Cabinet were for a treaty accompanying the surrender of the claim, though perfectly willing that Independence should, in the first instance, be allowed as the basis to treat on. This decision not coming up to Fox's views, he declared, with many expressions of regret, that his part was taken to quit his office, and that he held it on for the present solely in consideration of Lord Rockingham's illness.* Thus, at the moment of the Prime Minister's decease, his Government was in truth already in a state of dissolution. It was plain that both the sections composing it, if even they could by any means be kept united, would at all events in the choice of his successor be warmly striving for the mastery.

* MS. Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton. See the extracts in my Appendix.

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The King cut the knot asunder. Next day, he sent for Lord Shelburne, and offered him the First Lordship of the Treasury; an honour which the Earl saw no reason to decline. But Lord Shelburne accompanied this announcement with such communications to Fox, as might, he hoped, make it not unwelcome. Lord Keppel conversing with the Duke of Grafton, only a few days afterwards, "acknowledged that the share of power "offered by Lord Shelburne was all that Mr. Fox "could desire, to assist his management of the "House of Commons, and was equal to any thing "that could in justice be requested, or with "propriety granted." But the great orator was not to be so appeased. He held a meeting with Lord John Cavendish and a few more of his close friends, at which it was agreed to recommend the Duke of Portland to His Majesty, as the most fitting successor to Lord Rockingham. Failing to attain this object, Fox and Cavendish resigned, as did also the Duke of Portland at Dublin, and several in the lower ranks of office, more especially Burke and Sheridan.

The conduct of Fox in these transactions is not easily defended. He had broken with the Cabinet majority on a most narrow point, on a mere splitting of hairs, and even on that point Lord Shelburne, it appears, was willing to give way. His other grievances against his brother Secretary, though we may allow them some degree of just foundation, appear greatly overstrained. Such is

the case, even with the main one—the imputed failure of Shelburne to make known without delay the secret hints of Franklin on the subject of Canada, since might not those hints be best baffled the more secret and the less official they remained? Nay more, considering that America was in the department which Lord Shelburne held, the truth really seems to be that, if one Secretary had cause to complain of the other for encroaching on his official province in the negotiations at Paris, that complaint which was made by Fox might more justly have proceeded from his colleague. In the next place, had Fox desired to put himself in competition with Shelburne for the Treasury, his pre-eminent abilities and his well won lead in the House of Commons would have warranted his claim. But to run all risks of discord and division by proposing another man whose main merit lay in this, that he was the Lord of Welbeck, and had married a daughter of the House of Devonshire — to put forward in his own stead a mere Ducal puppet, whose strings others were to pull — seems a course which, however conformable to the precedents of his party, was, and I trust ever will be, repugnant to the spirit of his nation. How true and just the reflection which, at that crisis, Horace Walpole makes: — "It is very entertaining, that two or "three great families should persuade themselves "that they have an hereditary and exclusive right "of giving us a head without a tongue!" *

* Letter to the Rev. W. Mason, July 10. 1782, ed. 1851.

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But further still, even if it was deemed indispensable that the choice should be confined to men of the highest rank, one might have been selected far superior to Portland, at least in talent and Parliamentary standing, though destitute of a Cavendish connection. The Duke of Richmond, whom Fox and Burke now concurred in passing by, might have been, at least according to their own previous estimation, no unworthy chief.*

It is, therefore, no matter of surprise that, in the public opinion of the time, Fox was deemed to have no sufficient cause for throwing up his office, and breaking up his party. Many fewer placemen than he had expected, joined him in his resignation; many fewer independent Members approved it. Fox was further embarrassed by this difficulty, that in the causes he assigned he could not speak freely of the pending negotiations which were still mysteries of State. "Lord George Cavendish," writes Walpole on the 8th of July, "owned to "me that there might be reasons that could not be "given. I said: — 'My Lord, will worse reasons "'satisfy the country?'" — And two days later Walpole adds: "They will receive another blow

* We find Burke, who was so ready to put aside the Duke of Richmond in 1782, speak of him in 1780 with the utmost exuberance of eulogy. Coupling him with Savile, he terms them "the first men of their age and their country." (Corresp. vol. ii. p. 386.) In his principles and public views, as detached from party, Burke is always admirable; but whenever we come to persons, it is curious to compare his verdicts with those of posterity.

"as sensible as any they have experienced; Sir "George Savile disapproves their proud retreat." CHAP. LXVI. 1782.

The business of the Session had been already so far advanced, that the Houses could be prorogued on the 11th after the required explanations. In these Burke took part with a degree of passion which approached to fury; exclaiming that if Lord Shelburne was not already a Catiline or a Borgia in morals, the cause could only be ascribed to his understanding! But here the retort was easy, — since you thought him so why did you consent to serve in the same government? Shelburne himself in the other House spoke with spirit and temper. "It would be strange indeed," he said, "if I had "given up to the two colleagues who have now "thought proper to retire all those Constitutional "ideas which for seventeen years I had imbibed "from my master in politics, the late Earl of Chat- "ham. That Noble Earl always declared that the "country ought not to be governed by any oligar- "chical party or family connection; and that if it "was to be so governed, the Constitution must of "necessity expire. On these principles I have "always acted. They are not newly taken up by "me for ambitious purposes; and your Lordships "may recollect one particular expression that in "referring to them I used some time ago. I de- "clared that I would never consent that the King "of England should be a King of the Mahrattas; "— for among these Mahrattas the custom is, it

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" seems, for a certain number of great lords to elect " a Peishwah, who is thus the creature of an aristo- " cracy, and is vested with the plenitude of power, " while their King is in fact nothing more than a " Royal pageant."

Lord Shelburne's new appointments were quickly made. Thomas Townshend and Lord Grantham became Secretaries of State, while the place of Lord John Cavendish as Chancellor of the Exchequer was much more than filled by Mr. Pitt. Lord Temple went to Ireland as Lord Lieutenant, taking with him as Secretary his brother William, afterwards Lord Grenville. But on the other hand, Lord Shelburne had great difficulties among his old remaining colleagues. Some who had never belonged to the Rockingham connection were yet perplexed and grieved by the sudden disruption of a party so lately reunited. Lord Camden would only pledge himself to continue for three months, and the Duke of Grafton went into the country in no contented mood. Of the Rockinghams, Lord Keppel especially had been most reluctant to separate from Fox, but could not conscientiously, he thought, desert the naval service in the midst of the campaign.

Our naval service was indeed once again in a perilous streight. The French Admiral De Guichen had formed a junction at Cadiz with the Spanish fleet under Don Luis de Cordova; and their united force, amounting to twenty-five sail of the line, approached the British Channel, capturing on their

way eighteen merchant-men of the outward-bound Quebec trade. Just fears were felt for the safety of the convoys then on their return from both the East Indies and the West. At a Cabinet dinner given by the Duke of Grafton, "nothing," he declares, "could exceed the anxiety and uneasiness "of both Lord Keppel and General Conway on "this state of things, though they declared that "their consolation was great when they saw the "spirit everywhere which brought forward so great "a naval force infinitely sooner than it could have "been expected." Early in July Lord Howe, who had just performed another important service by confining the Dutch to their harbours, was directed to issue forth from Portsmouth against the combined fleet. He had no more at his first departure than twelve sail of the line, but aid was sent out to him as soon as possible in single ships; and the Ministry placed a well-founded reliance on his judgment and skill. So effectually indeed did he exert these qualities, that while he restrained the enemy from bringing his inferior force to a general engagement, he protected from them the arrival of the Jamaica convoy under Sir Peter Parker, and compelled them (the Spanish ships, moreover, being as usual ill-provided and unready), to steer back to the southward with all their objects unachieved.

Lord Howe had no sooner come back from this successful cruise, than with equal spirit he pressed the re-equipment of his fleet for another expedition in aid of Gibraltar. But the return of our ships to

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Portsmouth, joyful as at first it seemed, was dashed by a grievous disaster which, though occurring in a peaceful harbour, equalled the worst calamities of war. The Royal George, of 108 guns, commanded by the gallant Admiral Kempenfeldt, was deemed the first ship in the British navy. It had borne a conspicuous part in the celebrated action of Lord Hawke on the coasts of Brittany, and since that time had been repeatedly the flag-ship of nearly all our great commanders. In order to stop a slight leak previous to a new expedition, it became necessary to lay this vessel slightly on her side. But so little risk was anticipated from the operation, that the Admiral with his officers and men remained on board. Nay more, as is usually the case on coming into port, the ship was crowded with people from the shore, especially women and children; and the number of the women only has been computed at three hundred. Such was the state of things at ten o'clock in the morning of the 29th of August, the Admiral writing in his cabin and most of the people between decks, and it is supposed that the carpenters in their eagerness may have inclined the ship a little more than they were ordered, or than the commanders knew, when a sudden squall of wind arising threw the ship fatally upon her side, and her gun-ports being open she almost instantly filled with water and went down. A victualler which lay alongside was swallowed up in the whirlpool which the plunge of so vast a body caused; and several small craft, though at some distance,

were in the most imminent danger. About three hundred, chiefly sailors, were able to save themselves by swimming and the aid of boats, but the persons that perished — men, women, and children — though they could not be accurately reckoned, amounted, it is thought, almost to a thousand. Of these no one was more deeply and more deservedly lamented than Admiral Kempenfeldt himself. He was held both abroad and at home to be one of the best naval officers of his time; the son of a Swedish gentleman, who coming early into the English service generously followed the ruined fortunes of his master, James the Second, but who after the death of that monarch was recalled by Queen Anne, and who has been portrayed by Addison in his excellent sketch of Captain Sentry. *

Of a similar kind, and at nearly the same period, was the disaster that befell the best of Rodney's prizes. They were on their way to England manned by English crews, when, shattered as they were already, a violent tempest assailed them, and they foundered at sea. Thus did we lose the much-desired sight of the noblest sign of our late successes, our great maritime trophy the Ville de Paris. Yet the public concern at this mischance did not impair the burst of gratitude and joy with which Rodney was welcomed on his own return. Such enthusiasm, it is pleasing to record, was by no means confined to the rich and great. Thus Rodney having arrived at the Bush Tavern, Bristol, and

* Spectator, No. 2. Ann. Regist. 1782, p. 226.

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being sumptuously entertained with his retinue, called next morning for his bill. "Your Lordship "forgets that you paid it beforehand, on the 12th "of April," — was the answer of the worthy landlord.*

On the 11th of September, Lord Howe having repaired his ships and increased them by divers reinforcements to thirty-four of the line, set sail for the relief of Gibraltar. During upwards of three years already had the rock-fortress been blockaded or besieged. In the summer of 1779, on the declaration of war with Spain, the Spaniards had sent out a squadron to intercept the supplies by sea, and had formed a camp at San Roque for their attack by land. But the time was long past when, as in 1704, the place might be reduced in a single day. Now the works were strong; the garrison was vigilant and numerous, exceeding 5,000 men; and approaches could only be made by a long and narrow strip of sand — the "Neutral Ground" — stretching from the foot of the almost perpendicular rock to the less towering heights that circle the bay of Algesiras. The Governor General Elliot was a gallant veteran, who, like the Duke of Wellington at a later period, had received his education at a Military Academy in France. Ever resolute and ever wary, and prevailing by example as much as by command, he combined throughout the siege the spirit to strike a blow at any weak point of the assailants, with a vigilant forethought

* Life by Mundy, vol. ii. p. 334.

extending even to the minutest measures of defence. For example, the first month of the investment did not pass away without an order that henceforth, contrary to the usual practice, the troops should mount guard with their hair unpowdered,—an order which might be deemed trifling at the time, but which afterwards proved of great value in husbanding the stores.

Before the close of the year, as Elliot had anticipated, the garrison, and still more the inhabitants, were reduced to great distresses for provision. Thistles, dandelions, and wild leeks were for some time the daily nourishment of numbers. But in January 1780, they were relieved by the arrival of Sir George Rodney and his victory over Don Juan de Langara. Don Juan himself was brought a prisoner into the bay of Gibraltar, and conducted to lodgings in the town. One day, as it is recorded, the captive Spaniard went out in a boat to visit Admiral Digby, in whose ship was serving one of the young Princes — the same who in after years became King William the Fourth. When Don Juan de Langara first came on board, he was presented in due form to the English Prince. But when the conference between the chiefs had closed, and it was intimated that Don Juan desired to return, His Royal Highness appeared in his character of midshipman, and standing before the two Admirals as they sate, announced in the respectful tone becoming an inferior, that the boat was ready. The Spaniard, surprised at seeing the

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son of a monarch acting as a petty officer, immediately exclaimed: "Well does England deserve "her superiority at sea when the humblest stations "in her navy are filled by Princes of the Blood!"*

On the departure of Rodney and his squadron, the Spaniards resumed their blockade, and in the course of a few months again reduced the garrison to streights of various kinds. The English were, however, relieved from time to time by the opportune arrival of some small trading vessels which contrived to elude the enemy's cruisers. Thus, in May, there came in a Moorish sloop from Malaga, freighted with butter, raisins, and leather. So scarce had the last of these become at Gibraltar, that several of the officers, and most of the men had been obliged to wear shoes made of canvas with soles of spun yarn. But in the autumn, they lost the prospect of any further Moorish supplies. The gold of Spain wrought so far with the Emperor of Morocco, that he prohibited the commerce with us in the strongest terms, even banishing Mr. Logie the Consul, and all other English, from Tangiers. The prices of provisions at Gibraltar rose in consequence to an extravagant height. A goose sold for 1*l.* 10*s.*, a turkey for 2*l.* 8*s.*, and a pound of biscuit crumbs for ten pence or a shil-

* Some doubts having been expressed as to the truth of this story, as related in Drinkwater's Siege of Gibraltar (ch. iii.), it was referred to King William himself. In reply, a letter from Sir Herbert Taylor, written by His Majesty's command, and dated March 24. 1835, declares that "the anecdote is correctly "stated in every respect."

ling. The poor soldiers, and yet more the poor people, suffered great distress, in many cases aggravated by the horrors of the scurvy. Meanwhile the enemy made several attacks by means of fire-ships and gun-boats, besides the fire from their lines; all these, however, were bravely encountered and successfully repelled. At length, in April, 1781, after many months of grievous scarcity, when the troops had been reduced to well nigh the lowest rations, and when many a heavy heart among them was turning towards home, there came to them once more the joyful hour of relief from England. They beheld with delight from their ramparts, one morning as the mist slowly rolled away, the flag ship of Admiral Darby steer into their bay, followed by several other men of war and by his convoy, consisting of near a hundred vessels laden with provisions and supplies.

But their delight was not of long duration. The safe arrival of this second convoy convinced the Spaniards that they should never succeed in reducing the garrison by famine; and they had determined, if any such new succour should be brought, to relinquish the blockade, and commence some more active measures of aggression. Their preparations were already made; and thus, Admiral Darby's fleet was scarcely moored, ere they opened a bombardment from their batteries. That bombardment they continued for many days and weeks, long after the English stores were landed, and the English men of war had sailed

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away. Besides the damage to the ramparts or the public buildings, great number of the houses in the town were set on fire and consumed, while others yielded to the masses of stone and rubbish which were loosened by the shells, and came toppling from the rock. Thus were laid open to view several secret magazines hoarded up by the lower class of traders, to be dealt out in scanty portions and at exorbitant rates. Roused to fury by the sight, and still suffering from the privations which these supplies, if earlier disclosed, might have averted, the common men could not be restrained from havoc and plunder. First they drank freely at the wine and spirit stores — an excess which led of course to more excesses still. "A great quantity "of liquor,"— thus writes one of their officers and the historian of the siege, Captain John Drinkwater, — "was wantonly destroyed, and in some "cases incredible profusion prevailed. Among "other instances, I recollect seeing a party of "soldiers roast a pig by a fire made of cinnamon." There was need of great firmness combined with great temper and discretion in General Elliot to arrest without still worse consequences these dangerous disorders.

It is remarkable, that while by the bombardment, so many houses were destroyed, but few lives in comparison were lost. So effectual was the protection afforded by the casemates, that although from the middle of April to the close of May, the enemy, as was computed, fired above

56,000 shot, and 20,000 shells, the garrison had no more than seventy slain. The Governor was indefatigable in repairing the breaches or other damage which the enemy's artillery effected in his walls; and though in most cases he reserved his fire, he poured it with the greater effect whenever any vulnerable point appeared. To defend himself against the gun-boats, — for these as well as the batteries took part in the bombardment, — he cut down several brigs into frames, mounting each with four or five pieces of heavy cannon.

Discouraged at the slight progress which they made, the enemy slackened in their fire during all the summer months. But in the autumn they were observed to show the utmost activity in drawing nearer their approaches, and completing and extending their already formidable works. Of these and of the guards which manned them Elliot obtained accurate intelligence by means of a deserter, and he formed his plans accordingly. At midnight of the 26th of November, he directed a sudden sally, having kept his purpose a profound secret till after sunset the same evening. The body of troops sent forth amounted to 2,000 men, commanded by Brigadier Ross, but accompanied by the Governor himself. This bold and well-concerted enterprise succeeded beyond the most sanguine expectations. The Spaniards, taken by surprise, fled on all sides; and within an hour, by the industry of the assailants, flames burst forth from every quarter of the works. The English

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regained their own strong hold in safety, first, however, spiking the artillery and laying trains which blew up the magazines of gunpowder, and completed the destruction. So utterly unexpected was this onset, that there was found in the quarters of the Spanish commanding officer a report ready written, to be sent to his General next morning, and stating that "nothing extraordinary "has occurred," — a report in which, as Captain Drinkwater says drily, it must be acknowledged that the Spaniard had been a little premature.

For several days the Spaniards appeared to be almost stupified by their surprise. Their batteries continued to burn, and they made no attempt to quench the flames. But in December, they slowly applied themselves to repair the smoking ruins, and their bombardment was resumed, though by no means with the same vigour as before. Early in 1782, they were cheered by the news that Minorca had yielded to the Duke de Crillon; and still more were their spirits raised when they saw De Crillon himself appear among them, and assume the chief command. He was followed by a large body of his victorious troops; and the total force, French and Spanish, now combining against a barren rock, amounted to full 33,000 men, with 170 heavy pieces of artillery. On the other hand, the garrison had been enabled, by means of succours from England, to repair, and more than repair, their recent losses. With eighty large cannon on their walls, they were now, including a marine brigade, upwards of 7,000 strong; for the

most part well inured to privation and fatigue, and sharing in the resolute determination of their chief to maintain at all hazards their post for Old England and the King. The eyes of all Europe, it may be said, were turned to this memorable siege. A nephew of the Corsican General Paoli, with some sixty volunteers, joined the ranks of the garrison; while from Paris, two Princes of the Blood, the Comte d'Artois, and the Duke de Bourbon, set forth to join in the attack. King Charles of Spain, though usually sedate, nay even phlegmatic in his temper, had grown so eager for the reduction of this fortress, that his first question in the morning as he rose was always, "Is it taken?" and on being answered in the negative, he never failed to add: "It soon will be!"*

The arrival of the French princes in the camp before Gibraltar was marked by an exchange of courtesies, honourable alike to both sides. On passing through Madrid, the Comte d'Artois had taken charge of a mail for the garrison, and on reaching the camp, transmitted the letters by a flag of truce. The Duke de Crillon, by the same occasion, sent over a present of fruit, game, and vegetables for the Governor's own table, promising a further supply, and desiring to know which kind he liked best. The reply of General Elliot might well be taken for a model in such communications. He acknowledged his enemy's present in most grateful terms, but owned that in accept-

* Coxe's Bourbon Kings of Spain, vol. v. p. 121.

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ing it he had broken through his resolution that he would never, so long as the war continued, receive any provisions for his private use. "I confess," he added, "I make it a point of honour to par- "take both of plenty and scarcity in common with "the lowest of my brave fellow-soldiers. This fur- "nishes me with an excuse for the liberty I now "take of entreating your Excellency not to heap "on me any more favours of this kind." *

De Crillon, on taking the command, had seen little prospect of prevailing on the land side any better than those who had gone before him. But he fixed his hopes on some floating batteries of new invention to be constructed in the neighbouring port of Algesiras, by the Chevalier D'Arçon, a French engineer of considerable reputation. These batteries, said D'Arçon, who had first contrived them, would be both impregnable and incombustible; wholly bomb-proof at the top, and fortified on the larboard side with great timbers, to the thickness of six or seven feet, bolted with wood-work and covered with raw hides. They were to carry guns of heavy metal, and to be moored by iron chains within half gun-shot of the walls. There it was hoped, that silencing the English fire, and throwing forward mantelets to carry to the shore bodies of French troops, their assault, combined with another on the land defences, and covered by

* Letter of the Duke de Crillon, August 19. 1782, and the Governor's reply of the next day. It appears from De Crillon's letter, that General Elliot at this time lived entirely upon vegetables.

a fleet of men of war, could not fail to carry the place by storm. CHAP. LXVI. 1782.

For several months did the port of Algesiras resound with the stir and din of this great armament. Ten large ships were cut down as bases of the floating batteries; 200,000 cubic feet of timber were assigned for their construction; and they were mounted with 142 pieces of artillery, exclusive of those on the land side. Yet formidable as might seem such equipments, daily going on before his eyes, the Governor was in no degree dispirited. He continued with unremitting energy all his preparations for defence, placing especial hope in the system of red-hot balls, which were first devised and recommended by his Lieutenant-Governor, Boyd. To prepare them in sufficient numbers, there was a large distribution of furnaces and grates throughout the English troops. And so familiar did our soldiers grow, as was wished, with these new implements of death, that in speaking of them to each other, their common phrase was, "the roasted potatoes."

Early in September the preparations of the French and Spaniards were almost completed, and in the second week their united fleet, so lately threatening the British Channel, sailed into Algesiras bay. It was thought desirable to proceed at once to the grand attack, so as to anticipate the arrival of Lord Howe. On the morning of the 13th, accordingly, the signal was given; and while from all the lines on shore was maintained

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the tremendous fire which they had opened for some days, the ten floating batteries from Algesiras bore down in admirable order for their appointed stations. Before ten o'clock they were anchored at regular distances within six hundred yards of the English works. Then commenced a cannonade on both sides so fierce, so incessant, and from such a number of pieces of artillery, as it is alleged had never been seen since the discovery of gunpowder. During many hours the attack and the defence were steadily maintained; no superiority as yet being seen on either side. The English fire was not silenced, but, on the other hand, it could by no means prevail against the massy and strong-built sea-towers. The heaviest shells rebounded from their tops; the red-hot balls seemed to make no impression on their sides; or if by these last a momentary spark was kindled, it was at once subdued by the water-engines which they had on board. At length in the afternoon, the discharges of their ordnance visibly slackened; and it became apparent that several of the last red-hot balls which had pierced their sides could not be extinguished. Before midnight the Talla Piedra, the strongest of the battering vessels, and the flag-ship, the Pastora, by her side, were in full flames, by the light of which the artillery of the garrison could resume its volleys and direct them with the surest aim. "The "rock and neighbouring objects," says an eye-witness, "were highly illuminated, forming with "the constant flashes of our cannon a mingled

"scene of sublimity and terror." Six more of the battering ships caught fire, and the question to the French and Spaniards upon them was no longer of victory or conquest, but of life. Dismal shrieks were heard in the intervals of firing from the poor wretches who expired in the flames or in the waves: and numbers more were seen as they faintly clung to the sides of the burning vessels or floated on pieces of timber from the wrecks. More than sixteen hundred of the enemy are computed to have perished. Much greater still would have been the havoc, but for the humanity of our countrymen—above all, of Captain Curtis with the sailors of the marine brigade, who no sooner saw the victory decided than they strained every nerve to save the vanquished. By their exertions between three and four hundred men were brought to shore. Eight of the floating batteries were already consuming or consumed; it was hoped to preserve the two that remained as trophies, but unexpectedly the one burst into flames and blew up, and it was deemed requisite after a survey to burn the other. Thus did the morrow's sun, instead of still beholding those vast sea-towers which had so lately breasted the waves in all their pride, and "instinct with life and motion," shine only upon shattered hulls or stranded fragments from the wrecks. Thus did the Pillars of Hercules, so conspicuous as emblems on the device of the Emperor Charles the Fifth, with their ancient motto, NEC PLUS ULTRA; and borne by him upon his banners

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in the wars against King Francis the First, now in British hands baffle and beat back all the endeavours of the heirs of Charles the Fifth and Francis the First combined!

The Chevalier d'Arçon, the contriver of the whole design, so signally defeated, had been on board the Talla Piedra till past midnight, and wrote to the French ambassador in the first hours of his anguish: "I have burnt the temple of Ephesus; "every thing is gone, and through my fault! "What comforts me under my calamity is, that the "honour of the two Kings remains untarnished." Honour, indeed, had not been lost, either by those Kings or by their subjects. Honour never can be lost where bravery is shown. But against such valiant and honourable foemen how nobly had England prevailed! The year had been commenced by French and Spaniards with the confident hope of profiting by our last reverses in North America, and wresting from us both Jamaica and Gibraltar. Both attempts were made accordingly, with premeditation, with skill, with courage, but with what issue? Against the one England had stretched forth her sword, against the other, her shield; against the one there was Rodney's bold attack; against the other, Elliot's resolute resistance!

Early in October, Lord Howe entered the Streights in line of battle with his ships of war. The combined fleet in the bay, though superior in numbers, did not venture to engage him, and Lord Howe landed without hindrance at Gibraltar both

a reinforcement of men and a supply of provisions and stores. The siege, however, was continued in name at least until the February following, when the news of peace arrived. Meanwhile in England there was the unanimous desire to do honour to the gallant men who had so successfully maintained her cause. The thanks of Parliament were voted to the officers and privates of the garrison. General Elliot received the Order of the Bath, with which he was invested by commission upon the ramparts of the King's Bastion, in sight of the works which his prowess had preserved; and on his return to England in 1787, the brave veteran, then seventy years of age, was raised to the peerage, as Lord Heathfield, of Gibraltar.*

At Paris, the negotiations had been much impeded by the resignation of Mr. Fox, and the return of Mr. Grenville. These events had in many minds cast a shade of doubt over the true intentions of the British Government. Lord Shelburne, however, renewed the most pacific assurances, sending to Paris in the place of Mr. Grenville, and conjointly with Mr. Oswald, Mr.

* The particulars of this siege are best learnt from the Journal of one of the officers serving in the garrison, Captain John Drinkwater, whose excellent narrative has been often reprinted, and is justly esteemed. For the French and Spanish views of the same transaction, see, amongst others, the Apology of Florida Blanca, printed in Coxe's Appendix (vol. v. pp. 242—258.), and the Voyage en Espagne (par Bourgoing), vol. iii. pp. 219—241., ed. 1789. "The Spaniards speak of General "Elliot with a spirit of enthusiasm," writes John Howard, from Pamplona, in April 1783. See his Life by Field, p. 333.

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Alleyne Fitzherbert, well known in after years as Lord St. Helen's. These gentlemen acted in amity and concert with each other, although, strictly speaking, negotiation with America was, as before, the province of Mr. Oswald, and negotiation with the European Powers the province of Mr. Fitzherbert. Dr. Franklin, on the other hand, had associated with him three other American Commissioners, arriving in succession: first, Mr. Jay, from Spain, then Mr. Adams, from Holland, and, finally, Mr. Laurens, from London.

It became, ere long, apparent to the British agents, that the Courts of France and Spain were by no means earnest or sincere in the wish for an immediate close to the war. With the hope of soon reducing Gibraltar, or of otherwise depressing England, they put forward at this time, either inadmissible pretensions, or vague and ambiguous words. It therefore became an object of great importance to negotiate, if possible, a separate pacification with America. At first sight, there appeared almost insuperable difficulties in the way of such a scheme. The treaty of alliance of February 1778, between France and the United States, stipulated in the most positive terms, that neither party should conclude a peace or truce with England, unless with the consent of the other party, first obtained. Since that time, the French, far from falling short of their engagement, had gone much beyond it. There was no longer the least foundation for the reproach which Franklin,

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with his usual felicitous wit, was disposed to urge against them at the outset, as though too sparing of their means.* To say nothing of their despatch of a fleet and army, and besides their annual loans and advances to the United States, they had made, in 1781, a free gift of six millions of livres, and in the spring of 1782, granted another to the same amount. †

On the other hand, however, there was a strong temptation to treat without delay. War, if still waged, would be mainly for French or Spanish objects. It could be made quite clear, that when once the independence of the Americans was fully established and secured, they had no interest any more than England in continuing an unprofitable contest. Moreover, there had sprung up in the minds of the Commissioners at Paris a strong feeling of distrust and suspicion against all their new allies. That feeling we find most plainly expressed by Mr. Adams in relating his own conversations with Mr. Oswald. "You are afraid," said Mr. Oswald to-day, "of being made the tools of the

* "Au commencement du sejour de M. le Docteur Franklin "à Paris, et à un diner de beaux esprits, un de ces Messieurs "s'avise de lui dire,—'Il faut avouer, Monsieur, que c'est un "'grand et superbe spectacle que l'Amerique nous offre "'aujourd'hui.'—'Oui,' repondit modestement le Docteur de "Philadelphie, 'mais les spectateurs ne paient point!'—Ils ont "payé depuis!" (Memoires par Grimm et Diderot, vol. ii. p. 112., ed. 1813.)

† "This Court has granted us six millions of livres for the "current year, but it will fall vastly short of our occasions." (Franklin to John Adams, Passy, April 20, 1782.)

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"Powers of Europe." "Indeed I am," said I. "What Powers?" said he. "All of them," said I.*

But in the minds of the American Commissioners, the distrust against France was more vehement than against any other State. It had grown from no real root; it was derived only from several slight inferences or conjectures; above all, as they stated, from a letter of M. de Marbois, Secretary of the French Legation at Philadelphia, — a letter which spoke in disparaging terms of their claim upon the fisheries, and which having been intercepted, was shown by the English negotiators to Franklin and his colleagues. The best American writers of the present day acknowledge that all surmises thence arising were in truth ill-founded; that the conduct of France towards the United States had been marked throughout not only by good faith and honour, but by generosity. And it is very remarkable that long before the letter of M. de Marbois was produced at Paris, — so early as July, 1782, — we find Mr. Oswald write privately to Lord Shelburne, that "the "Commissioners of the Colonies have shown a "desire to treat and to end with us on a separate "footing from the other Powers."†

* This was on the 18th of November, 1782. See the "Diplomatic Correspondence" of the American Revolution, vol. vi. p. 483.

† The public letters of Mr. Oswald since the change of Ministry were addressed in due course to Mr. Secretary Townshend. Those to Lord Shelburne (besides the copies of some now with the rest at the State Paper Office) are preserved at Lansdowne House; but their main passages have been,

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The separate negotiation thus arising was delayed, — first, by the severe illness of Dr. Franklin, and next, by some points of form in the commission of Mr. Oswald. When at length the more solid part of the negotiation was commenced, the hints of Franklin for the cession of Canada were quietly dropped, — with the greater ease from their having been transmitted in a confidential form. It is also worthy of note, that Lord Shelburne prevailed in his desire of acknowledging the independence of the States by an article of the treaty, and not, as Fox had wished, by a previous declaration. This point, a thing of form merely, not of substance, was far from having the importance which Fox ascribed to it; yet, so far as the two courses are compared, Lord Shelburne's appears the more natural and just in theory, and certainly in practice bore no evil fruit.

The real difficulties of this treaty turned first upon the fishing grounds which the English were not willing to yield, but on which the Americans stood firm; and secondly, upon the question of the Loyalists or Tories. It was, as it ought to be, a main object with the British Government to obtain, if possible, some restitution to the men who, in punishment for their continued allegiance to the

through Lord Lansdowne's permission, printed by Mr. Sparks, as notes to Franklin's Correspondence. See especially vol. ix. p. 363. In Franklin's Life (p. 495.), Mr. Sparks is most clear and explicit in owning the perfect good faith of the French Court.

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King, had found their property confiscated and their persons banished. But from the first, Dr. Franklin held out no hopes of any satisfaction on this point. The Commissioners, he said, had no such power, nor had even the Congress. They were willing that the Congress should, with certain modifications, recommend those indemnities to the several States; and as one of the negotiators from England tells us, they to the last "continued to "assert that the recommendation of the Congress "would have all the effect we proposed."* The British diplomatists persevered in their original demand, and at one time there seemed a probability that the negotiations might break off chiefly on this ground. Twice was Mr. Strachey, the Under Secretary of State, an able and experienced man, despatched to Paris to aid Mr. Oswald with his counsel and co-operation. But at last, the mind of Franklin, ever ingenious and fertile of resources, devised a counter scheme. He said that he would allow for the losses which the loyalists had suffered, provided another account were opened of the mischief they had done, as of slaves carried off, or houses burned; new Commissioners to be appointed to strike a balance between the two computations. At this formidable proposal, involving an endless train of discussions and disputes, the negotiators from England finally gave way.

Matters being thus adjusted, the Preliminary

* Mr. Strachey to Secretary Townshend, November 29. 1782. State Paper Office, and Appendix to the present volume.

or Provisional Articles were signed at Paris on the 30th of November, by the four American Commissioners on the one side, and by Mr. Oswald on the other. These Articles "to be inserted in and "to constitute the Treaty of Peace," said the preamble, "but which treaty is not to be concluded "until terms of a Peace shall be agreed upon be-"tween Great Britain and France." By this limitation, in truth little better than an empty form, since the Provisional Articles were to be meanwhile binding and effective, the Americans were in hopes to avoid, or at least to soften, the resentment of their French allies. The first Article acknowledged in the fullest terms the independence of the United States. The second fixed their boundaries advantageously for them. The third gave their people the right to take fish on all the banks of Newfoundland, but not to dry or cure them on any of the King's settled dominions in America. By the fourth and fifth and sixth Articles, it was agreed that the Congress should earnestly recommend to the several legislatures to provide for the restitution of all estates belonging to real British subjects who had not borne arms against them. All other persons were to be at liberty to go to any of the provinces and remain there for twelve months, to wind up their affairs, the Congress also recommending the restitution of their confiscated property, on their repayment of the sums for which it had been sold. No impediment was to be put in the way of recovering BONÂ FIDE debts; no further

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prosecutions were to be commenced, no further confiscations made. It was likewise stipulated in the seventh and eighth Articles, that the English should at once withdraw their fleets and armies from every port or place which they still possessed within the limits of the United States; and that the navigation of the Mississippi, from its source to the ocean, should be for ever free and open to both parties. To these provisions was added a secret article respecting the limits of West Florida, if, at the close of the war it should be, or be put, in possession of England.

It is not to be supposed, that the French Government could view with unconcern the studied secrecy of this negotiation. The appearances of amity were indeed, for the sake of mutual interest, kept up on either side. But thus did the Comte de Vergennes unbosom himself in writing to the French Minister at Philadelphia: — "You will "surely be gratified as well as myself with the "very extensive advantages which our allies the "Americans are to receive from the peace; but "you certainly will not be less surprised than I "have been at the conduct of the Commissioners. ". . . . . They have cautiously kept them- "selves at a distance from me. Whenever I "have had occasion to see any one of them, "and inquire of them briefly respecting the pro- "gress of the negotiation, they have constantly "clothed their speech in generalities, giving me "to understand that it did not go forward, and "that they had no confidence in the sincerity of

"the British Ministry. Judge of my surprise "when, on the 30th of November, Dr. Franklin "informed me that the Articles were signed. The "reservation retained on our account does not "save the infraction of the promise which we have "made to each other not to sign except conjointly. ". . . . This negotiation is not yet so far ad- "vanced in regard to ourselves as that of the "United States; not but what the King, if he had "shown as little delicacy in his proceedings as the "American Commissioners, might have signed "Articles with England long before them."*

The meeting of Parliament had been appointed for the 26th of November, but on the near prospect of bringing the peace to a conclusion, it was further prorogued to the 5th of December; the motive being made public by a letter from the Secretary of State to the Lord Mayor. So great was the public excitement at the news that the Funds underwent most violent fluctuations, sometimes to the extent of three per cent. a day, and from fifty-seven, which they had been at first, rising at one time to sixty-five.† At this period, the strength of parties, in Parliament at least, was described by Gibbon, as follows: "A certain late

* This letter to M. de la Luzerne is dated December 19. 1782, and printed at full length in Franklin's Works, vol. ix. p. 452. For the American state papers on this subject, see the "Diplomatic Correspondence" of their Revolution, as published by Mr. Sparks, especially vol. iv. p. 84., vol. x. pp. 129. and 187.

† Letter of Romilly, in the Life by his Sons, vol. i. p. 247.

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"Secretary of Ireland" (Eden probably) "reckons "the House of Commons thus: Minister one hun- "dred and forty; Reynard, ninety; Boreas, one "hundred and twenty; the rest unknown or un- "certain. The last of the three by self or agents "talks too much of absence, neutrality, modera- "tion. I still think he will discard the game."*

It was hoped that the French and Spanish preliminary articles might, like the American, be concluded before the 5th of December. M. de Rayneval, the principal Secretary under M. de Vergennes, came to London, as he had once already, to quicken the negotiations. But the difficulties on the point of Gibraltar proved as yet insuperable, and thus at the meeting of Parliament, only one pacification could be announced. The King, in his opening Speech stated, that he had gone the full length of the powers vested in him by the Legislature, and offered to declare the Colonies in North America free and independent States by an article to be inserted in the treaty of peace — to which effect a provisional compact had been signed. And the King went on as follows, in weighty and memorable words: "In thus "admitting their separation from the Crown of "these kingdoms, I have sacrificed every consi- "deration of my own to the wishes and opinion of "my people. I make it my humble and earnest "prayer to Almighty God, that Great Britain "may not feel the evils which might result from

* Letter to Holroyd, October 14. 1782.

"so great a dismemberment of the empire; and "that America may be free from the calamities "which have formerly proved in the mother coun- "try how essential monarchy is to the enjoyment "of constitutional liberty. Religion, language, "interest, affections may, and I hope will, yet "prove a bond of permanent union between the "two countries; to this end neither attention nor "disposition on my part shall be wanting."

The Provisional Treaty, as recently signed, was not as yet laid before the Houses, but even its general announcement raised attacks upon the Government from the most opposite directions. In the Upper House, Lord Stormont violently censured the irrevocable concession of independence to American Commissioners, acting, he said, — for so ill was he informed of the real facts, — under the guidance and direction of French councils. Lord Shelburne defended himself as usual with eloquence and skill, but on a technical subtlety rather than on clear and broad grounds. The offer of independence, he argued, was not irrevocable; for, if France did not agree to peace, the offer ceased. In the Commons, Fox, on the contrary, contended that the acknowledgment of independence should have been the first step in the negotiation. Here, however, he was not supported by the other section out of power. Lord North, in his speech the first evening, owned that he could not look upon the formal final renunciation of our ancient sovereignty as warranted without

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making it at least the price of peace. And when, a few days afterwards, Fox moved for copies of such parts of the Provisional Treaty as related to the recognition of American independence, he was followed into the lobby by no more than 46 against 219.

Great intemperance of language was indulged in by the Opposition Whigs. Burke on the Report described the King's Speech as a medley of hypocrisies and nonsense, and Fox added that he detested as much as he despised it. They also took especial pleasure in taunting the Prime Minister with the words used by him in a former year, that whenever the independence of the Colonies was granted, the sun of England would have set. Yet, if more fairly viewed, where lay the inconsistency? Or is there any concession so disastrous but it may at length be wrung from the most honest Minister by the exigency of public affairs? In his first speech, when he succeeded to the Treasury, last summer, Lord Shelburne had, as it were, anticipated this attack, by adverting to his own past words, and declaring that the opinion which they stated was unchanged. But he had added, that however great might be the blow to England, he should, far from giving way to despair, endeavour to strain every nerve, and improve every opportunity, to prevent the Court of France from being in a situation to dictate the terms of peace. Thus, he said, although the sun of England would set with the loss of America, it was his resolution

to improve the twilight, and prepare for the rising of England's sun again! *

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On the 23rd of the same December, the Houses having adjourned for a month of Christmas Recess, the Government made great exertions that, before they met again, the negotiations with Spain and France might be brought to a successful close. Spain was most eager to regain Gibraltar by treaty, since she could not by force of arms; and France desired to support her in that pretension. Lord Shelburne, on his part, was not unwilling to yield the rock-fortress in exchange for the island of Porto Rico, which was deemed by him a satisfactory equivalent, and which might probably be wrung from the Court of Madrid, although its ambassador at Paris had declared in the first instance that both Cuba and Porto Rico must be numbered as among "the limbs of Spain." † In the less importance which Lord Shelburne appears to have attached to Gibraltar as an English possession, he did no more than follow the views of Lord Chatham, Lord Stanhope, and other eminent Ministers of England, since the Peace of Utrecht. But he encountered great difficulties in his own Cabinet. Several of his colleagues, the Duke of

* Speech in the House of Lords, July 10. 1782. The original *sunset speech* was delivered March 5. 1778. So early as January 25. 1781, however, Lord Shelburne declared that he "had waked from those dreams of British dominion." See Parl. Hist. vol. xix. p. 850., vol. xxi. p. 1035., and vol. xxiii. p. 194.

† Mr. Fitzherbert to Lord Grantham, October 28. 1782. State Paper Office, and Appendix.

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Grafton more especially, insisted that Trinidad, at least, should be added to the offers of Spain.*

1782. Moreover, the much coveted fortress had become endeared to the English people, since it had been so gallantly defended by their arms. When on the 5th of this month, the seconder of the Address in the House of Commons, Mr. Henry Bankes, had let fall some hints of the cession, probably by the express desire of Lord Shelburne, Fox had thundered against the bare idea of such a scheme. With these obstacles, some not wholly expected, full before him, the Prime Minister relinquished all thoughts of an equivalent, and intimated to the Court of Spain that no terms would tempt the British nation to give up Gibraltar. Such was the resentment of King Charles and of his Ministers at this reply, that they spoke of nothing less than an immediate renewal of the war. But finding their French allies disinclined to back them further, and softened in some degree by the offer of East

1783. Florida, in addition to the western districts of that province, which their troops had already overrun, they sent in at last a sullen acquiescence. Thus on the 20th of January, Mr. Fitzherbert was enabled to sign, at Versailles, Preliminaries of Peace with the Comte de Vergennes, as Minister of France, and also with the Comte d'Aranda, as ambassador from Spain.

* MS. Memoirs of the Duke of Grafton. See in my Appendix, the extract headed "Divisions in Lord Shelburne's "Cabinet."

By the treaty with France, the right of that Power to fish off the coast of Newfoundland and on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, was re-established on the same footing as in the treaties of Utrecht and of Paris, but with a clearer definition of the limits and the additional cession from England of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. In the West Indies, England restored St. Lucia and ceded Tobago, gaining back in return Granada, St. Vincent, Dominica, St. Kitt's, Nevis, and Montserrat. In Africa, England yielded the river Senegal with its dependencies and forts, and likewise the island of Goree, retaining the possession of Fort James and of the river Gambia. In India, the French recovered Chandernagore and Pondicherry, as also Mahé and the Comptoir of Surat, with securities for their commerce, and liberty to surround Chandernagore with a ditch for draining the waters. At home, they were gratified with the abrogation of all the articles in the treaty of Utrecht relative to the demolition of Dunkirk.

By the treaty with Spain, King George ceded the island of Minorca and both the Floridas, while King Charles guaranteed to the English the unmolested right of cutting logwood in a district of which the boundaries were to be fixed, and agreed to restore Providence and the Bahama isles. But this last article proved of small account, since, as it chanced, before the final suspension of hostilities the Bahamas were as easily recovered as they had been easily lost.

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With the Dutch, a truce only was for the present concluded; but within a few months a treaty was settled on the basis of mutual restitution, excepting the town of Negapatam, which Holland ceded.

Such were the conditions — said Mr. Pitt in his great speech to vindicate them — the conditions — the ruinous conditions forsooth! — to which this country, engaged with four powerful states in close alliance, and exhausted in all its resources, thought fit to subscribe for the dissolution of that alliance and the immediate enjoyment of peace. Apart from the party-spirit, the vehement party-spirit, of the day, it might be natural for men flushed with the recent glories of Elliot and Rodney to call out for better terms. But they did not know how much in this unequal contest the sinews of the body-politic had been tried and strained. They did not know, as Mr. Pitt set forth, that while every ship of war which could be spared was sailing with Lord Howe for the relief of Gibraltar, the Baltic fleet, almost as valuable as Gibraltar itself, since it contained all the materials for future war, was on its way to England wholly unprotected, that twelve Dutch sail of the line had lain in wait to intercept it, and that it passed by them through some almost inexplicable stroke of fortune. They did not know, that exclusive of the annual services the unfunded debt at that time was not less than thirty millions, or that the Ministers had found, on careful inquiry, a force of three thousand men the utmost which could be safely sent from this country

on any foreign expedition. With these facts before us, and after such reverses as those at Saratoga and York-town, can it be fairly denied that the terms of the peace, though no doubt unfavourable, were adequate to any just pretensions we might form? Or is there the smallest reason to suppose, that if either Lord North or Mr. Fox had been Prime Minister instead of the Earl of Shelburne, any better conditions could have been obtained? Let it also be remembered, that in the case of the United States and of the island of Minorca, we did no more than concede in form what we had already lost in fact; and that as to Dunkirk, we only removed a prohibition still galling to French pride and no longer needful for our own security. That harbour was first an object of jealousy when vessels were constructed of far inferior draught; and the ablest seamen, as the first Lord Hawke, had judged that no skill or expense would enable it to receive a fleet of the line.

How little such considerations weighed with heated partisans — how soon after the 27th of January, when copies of all three Preliminary Treaties were brought down by Mr. Secretary Townshend, both the party leaders in the Commons, Lord North and Mr. Fox, leagued together against them — how, from a new and strange coalition an ill-formed and ricketty government struggled into life — how the King chafed at the dominion, so long eluded, of the Great Whig Houses — and how, before the close of the year, His Majesty was again set free —

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are events that I shall leave to another historian, or certainly at least, to another history. It remains for me here to state, that the new administration, earnestly, as was its duty, pursued the conclusion of the definitive treaties. In the place of Mr. Oswald and of Mr. Fitzherbert, each of whom was deemed too much "Lord Shelburne's man," Mr. David Hartley and the Duke of Manchester were despatched to Paris. Between Mr. Hartley and the American Commissioners, articles of commercial intercourse were discussed at some length but without result. No blame whatever should attach to Mr. Fox who directed these negotiations, since, as it appears, he was desirous "to give as much "facility to the trade between the two countries "as is consistent with preserving the principles of "the Act of Navigation." * Yet Lord Shelburne always contended, that these commercial propositions would have thriven better had they been still confided to his care. Certain it is, at least, that in general Lord Shelburne had the larger and the clearer views of commerce. He was a warm and zealous disciple of Adam Smith, while Fox had turned but little thought to questions of political economy, and never so much as read the "Wealth "of Nations." †

* These are Mr. Fox's own words, in a letter to the King, of April 8. 1783. "Memorials," by Lord John Russell, vol. ii. p. 122., a publication, let me here add, of essential value to History.

† This was owned by himself, with his usual manly frankness, to Mr. Charles Butler. See the Reminiscences of the latter, vol. i. p. 176. ed. 1824.

The commercial propositions failing, the negotiators at length resolved, that the definitive Peace with America should be nothing beyond a transcript of the Provisional Articles. Thus, also, the Duke of Manchester had not been able to effect any material change in the Preliminary Treaties with France and Spain; but it was agreed that, for the sake of compliment, the Emperor of Germany and the Empress of Russia should be named as Mediators. On this footing, the three definitive Treaties with America, France, and Spain were signed; the former at Paris, and the two others at Versailles, but all three on the same day, the 3rd of September — that anniversary so memorable in the life of Cromwell.*

The cost of this war became a painful yet necessary consideration at its close. In 1774, near eleven millions of the National Debt had been paid off during as many years of peace. Yet the capital then still amounted to almost 136,000,000*l.* In 1785, after all the floating debts were funded, the National Debt, exclusive of terminable annuities, had grown to upwards of 238,000,000*l.* During the same period, the war expenses of France have

* On the 3rd of September Cromwell gained the victory of Dunbar; a year afterwards he obtained his "crowning mercy" at Worcester; and a few years after, on the same day, which he had ever esteemed the most fortunate for him, he died. See the fine stanzas on this subject in the fourth canto of Childe Harold (lxxxv. lxxxvi.), with the note annexed.

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been loosely estimated at seventy, of Spain at forty, and of Holland at ten millions sterling.*

It was not till the spring of 1785, that Mr. John Adams, — named by the United States their first Minister at the Court of their former Sovereign — arrived in London, or was presented at St. James's. There, on the 1st of June, attending the King's Levee in due form, he was led by Lord Carmarthen as Secretary of State into the King's Chamber. "I "think myself more fortunate than all my fellow-"citizens," said Mr. Adams to the King, "in having "the distinguished honour to be the first to stand "in Your Majesty's Royal presence in a diplomatic "character; and I shall esteem myself the happiest "of men if I can be instrumental in recommending "my country more and more to your Majesty's "Royal benevolence." "Sir," said George the Third, in answer, — and with that answer the narrative of this great war may most worthily conclude, — "I wish you to believe, and that it may "be understood in America, that I have done "nothing in the late contest but what I thought "myself indispensably bound to do by the duty "which I owed to my people. I will be very frank "with you. I was the last to consent to the sepa-"ration; but the separation having been made and "having become inevitable, I have always said, as

* Macpherson's Annals of Commerce, vol. iii. p. 408. and vol. iv. p. 93. ed. 1805.

"I say now, that I would be the first to meet the "friendship of the United States as an independent "Power." * CHAP. LXVI. 1783.

* John Adams to Secretary Jay, June 2. 1785, as printed in the Diplomatic Correspondence, and in Adams's collected Works, vol. viii. p. 255. Mr. Adams adds: "The King was "indeed much affected, and I confess I was not less so."

CHAPTER LXVII.

INDIA.

CHAP. LXVII. INDIA.

WHENEVER, in any modern History of England, an attempt has been made to combine, year by year, the transactions in Europe and in India, the result, it may be said without presumption, is seldom satisfactory. Such frequent breaks in the narrative, and changes in the scene, — with so thorough a difference in race and language, in religion, and in laws, — may fulfil the duty of an annalist, but not, as I conceive, the higher aim of an historian. Avoiding that error, as on full reflection I believe it to be, I design in this and the following Chapter, and in a connected series, to pursue the sketch of British India, which in two former Chapters I commenced; and to bring down its tale to that period decisive of its welfare, when, in the autumn of 1783, the Ministry of Fox and North not only judged it right, but found it necessary, to propose, in some or other form, a new measure for the government of our Eastern empire.

The victories of the English in India, during

Chatham's first administration, left to them a power great indeed, and nobly won, but as yet ill-administered and insecure. They had struck down their European rivals at Pondicherry, at Chandernagore, and at Chinsura. They had shot high above their titular liege-lords in the Deccan and Bengal. Of Bengal, indeed, they were in truth the masters, since Meer Jaffier, as their tool and instrument, sat enthroned on the Musnud of that province. On the other hand, they had no longer a chief of genius and of energy to guide them. The principal authority, since the departure of Clive, had devolved on Mr. Henry Vansittart, the father of the late Lord Bexley, a man of good intentions, but of moderate capacity. Thus the discipline of the victors was relaxed by their own successes. Thus their rapine ceased to be checked by a strong hand. Almost every Englishman in Bengal began to look upon speedy enrichment as his right, and upon the subservient natives as his prey.

Nor was it long ere a growing difference sprung up between them and their new Nabob. So early as the autumn of 1760, Meer Jaffier was found to engage in cabals against the Company. Mr. Vansittart and Colonel Caillaud deemed it necessary to advance with a few hundred of their troops to Cossim-Bazar, a suburb of Moorshedabad, beyond the river. They gave in their terms to Meer Jaffier. Meer Jaffier wavered and wrangled. Without further delay, he was surrounded in his palace at the dead of night, compelled to resign

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the Government, and then, at his own request, permitted to retire to Fort William, under the protection of the British flag; while his son-in-law, Meer Cossim, was in his stead proclaimed the Viceroy of Bengal.*

According to a compact made beforehand with the English, Meer Cossim forthwith yielded to them, as the price of their assistance, both an amount of treasure and an increase of territory. But his temper, which was bold and active, and by no means scrupulous, chafed at these sacrifices. Still less could he brook the oft-repeated acts of insolence and rapine of the GOMASTAHS,—the native factors or agents in the British pay. Ere long, therefore, he took some measures to shake off his subjection. He removed his Court from Moorshedabad to Monghir, two hundred miles further from Calcutta. He increased and disciplined his troops. He imprisoned or disgraced every man of note in his dominion who had ever shown attachment to the English. He began to enforce against the private traders the revenue laws, from which they claimed exemption. Angry disputes arose above all with the numerous English factory at Patna. Mr. Vansittart repaired to Monghir in the hope to avert hostilities. He concluded a treaty, agreeing that his countrymen should pay the inland duties to the amount of nine per cent.; and

* "The removal of Jaffier was an ill-advised measure . . . . . "had Clive remained in Bengal, there would probably have "been no revolution." (Note by Professor H. H. Wilson, to Mr. Mill's History ,vol. iii. p. 310. ed. 1840.)

not refusing on that occasion a present to himself of seven Lacs of Rupees from Meer Cossim. But the Council of Calcutta voted the terms dishonourable. As a last effort to avert hostilities, another deputation was sent from Calcutta to Monghir. At its head was Mr. Amyatt, one of the principal members of the Council. Not only, however, did these gentlemen wholly fail in their mission, but while passing the city of Moorshedabad on their way back, they were inhumanly murdered by a body of Cossim's own troops. After such an outrage, peace was no longer possible. Thus, in the summer of 1763, war again commenced, the Council of Calcutta resolving to depose Meer Cossim, and proclaiming the restoration of Meer Jaffier.

The British forces that took the field in this campaign amounted at first to scarcely more than 600 Europeans, and 1,200 Sepoys. With these, however, their commander, Major Adams, obtained rapid and great successes. He drove the enemy from their strong-holds, entered Moorshedabad, gained a battle on the plains of Geriah, and, after a nine days' siege, reduced Monghir. Nothing was left to Meer Cossim but Patna, and even Patna he perceived that he should not be able to maintain. Accordingly, he prepared for flight to the dominions of his powerful neighbour, Sujah Dowlah, the Nabob of Oude. But first he wreaked his vengeance on the English by an act of savage barbarity, second in its horrors only to those of the Black Hole. His prisoners of the factory at Patna

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exceeded one hundred and fifty persons. They comprised many peaceful traders, they comprised one infant child. All these the tyrant indiscriminately doomed to death—the Massacre of Patna, as it has ever since been termed. For his purpose Meer Cossim found a congenial instrument in one Sombre, otherwise Sumroo, a Frenchman by birth, and a deserter from the European service. This wretch gave his victims a significant though trivial token of their coming doom by sending, in the first place, to seize and carry off all their knives and forks, which might have been weapons in their hands. Next day, the 5th of October, in the evening, was the time of slaughter. Then the prison-house was surrounded by Sumroo and his band. Then the butchery of the prisoners was begun. It is said that they made all the resistance in their power, by throwing bottles and stones at their murderers. * But, of course, in vain. Some were cut to pieces with sabres, others shot down with musketry, and then barbarously mutilated. In both cases, the mangled limbs were flung into two wells, which were afterwards filled up with stones. Of the whole number of intended victims, only one was spared; a surgeon known to the Nabob, and William Fullarton by name.†

* Scott's Bengal, p. 427., and Thornton's History of India, vol. i. p. 448. But Mr. Thornton appears in error of two days as to the date of this transaction.

† The narrative of Mr. Fullarton, as the sole survivor of the Massacre, and as addressed to the Board at Calcutta, is (for whatever reason) extremely meagre. It is printed in the Third

The reduction of Patna by the English, which speedily followed the atrocious act within its walls, completed their conquest of Bengal. Under their auspices, Meer Jaffier was once more proclaimed as Nabob throughout the province. But, meanwhile, the thrusting forth of Meer Cossim — the dispossession by an European force of one of the native Princes — seemed to the latter an act far more atrocious than the Massacre of Patna. It gained favour for the exile at the Court of Oude; and the Court of Oude was then among the most powerful in India. Sujah Dowlah, besides the resources of his own vast province, could wield at his pleasure the authority, slender though it might be, that yet adhered to the Imperial name. The titular Emperor of Delhi, Shah Alum, had taken refuge with him, and had named him his Visier. Shah Alum, in real truth, was an exile and a wanderer, his very capital, Delhi, being held against him by Mahratta invaders, and half laid in ruins by their fury; but amidst every privation, in the eyes of the people he was still the "Great Mogul."

Thus combining, the three princes advanced at the head of an army well provided with artillery, and which numbered 50,000 men. On the other side, the English with their utmost exertions could bring into the field no more than 8,000 Sepoys

Report of the East India Committee, 1773, No. 62. Of his earlier letter, dated Nov. 3. 1763, in which he seems disposed to avoid any narrative at all, I obtained a MS. copy from the India House, through the kindness of my friend Sir James Weir Hogg.

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and 1,200 Europeans. Their commander, Major Adams, having died, his place was filled by Major, afterwards Sir Hector, Munro. But such in their ranks was the state of insubordination, nay, even mutiny, that the new chief found it necessary to make a most severe example of the ringleaders. He began by directing four and twenty native soldiers to be blown from the mouth of cannon. On this occasion, a touching incident occurred. When the orders were first given to tie four of these men to the guns from which they were to be blown, four others of the soldiers stepped forward and demanded the priority of suffering as a right, they said, which belonged to men who had always been first in the post of danger; and the claim thus preferred was allowed. An officer who was an eye-witness of the scene observes: "I belonged on this occasion to a detachment of "marines. They were hardened fellows, and some "of them had been of the execution-party that "shot Admiral Byng; yet they could not refrain "from tears at the fate and conduct of these gal-"lant grenadier Sepoys." *

Having thus in some measure, as he hoped, awed the disaffected, Munro led his troops to Buxar, a position above Patna, more than one hundred miles higher up the Ganges. There, in October 1764, he was attacked by the army of Oude. The battle was fierce, but ended in a brilliant victory to

* Memoir by Captain Williams, as cited in Malcolm's Life of Clive, vol. ii. p. 300.

the English; the enemy leaving 130 pieces of cannon and 4,000 dead upon the field.

On the day after the battle, Shah Alum, having with some followers made his escape from the army of his own Visier, drew near to the English camp. So long as he had been dependent on the Durbar of Oude, the English had shown little willingness to acknowledge his authority, but no sooner did he join their ranks and appear a ready instrument in their hands, than he became to them at once the rightful Sovereign of Hindostan. They concluded a treaty with him, he undertaking to yield them certain districts, and they to put him in possession of Allabahad and the other states of the Nabob of Oude.

The battle of Buxar, though so great a victory, did not decide the war. Major Munro failed in two attempts to storm the hill-fort of Chunar on the Ganges, — a fort in which all the treasures of Cossim were thought to be contained; and Sujah Dowlah obtained the aid of Holkar, a powerful Mahratta chief. Nevertheless he sent to sue for peace. But Munro refused all terms, unless both Cossim and Sombre were first given up to punishment. Nor was his purpose changed by the offer of a large sum of money for himself. With a higher spirit than Vansittart's, he cried: "If the Nabob "would give me all the Lacs in his treasury, I "would make no peace with him until he had "delivered up those murdering rascals; for I never "could think that my receiving eleven or twelve

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"Lacs of Rupees was a sufficient atonement for "the blood of those unfortunate gentlemen at "Patna."

Sujah Dowlah thought his honour concerned upon the other side. He refused to surrender the two exiles, but proposed an expedient altogether worthy an Asiatic Prince, that he would give secret orders for the assassination of Sombre, in the presence of any person whom the English General might send to witness the deed. That expedient being, of course, rejected, the war was resumed. A new tide of successes poured in upon the English. Early in 1765, they reduced the fortress of Chunar, scattered far and wide the force of the enemy, and entered in triumph his great city of Allabahad.

Through all these last years of strife it is gratifying to observe, not merely the valour, but also the mercy and forbearance, of the English owned, at least in private, by their enemies. The skill of Oriental scholars has laid open to us the records of a Mussulman historian of that period — the eye-witness, in some part, of the scenes which he describes: "It must be acknowledged," says he, "to "the honour of those strangers, that as their con-"duct in war and in battle is worthy of admiration, "so, on the other hand, nothing is more modest "and more becoming than their behaviour to an "enemy. Whether in the heat of action, or in the "pride of success and victory, these people seem "to act entirely according to the rules observed by

"our ancient chiefs and heroes." But at the same time, and, no doubt, with equal truth, this historian cannot forbear lamenting the grievous suffering and misrule endured by the helpless Bengalees after the departure of Lord Clive. "Oh God!" thus in another passage citing the Koran, he concludes: "Oh God! come to the assistance of thy afflicted "servants, and deliver them from the oppressions "they bear!" *

Meanwhile, the transactions in India which followed the departure of Clive had produced no slight amount of discord and cabals in England. These were heightened by the want of any strong and well framed authority in either country for Eastern affairs. In India, whether at Calcutta, at Madras, or at Bombay, the Governor was entitled to no more than one voice in the Council, with the advantage, should the numbers be found equal, of a second, or the casting vote. Moreover, the three Presidencies being as yet upon an equal footing, and with no central seat of power, were constant rivals, each envious of the other's successes, each believing that undue favour was

* Seir Mutakhareen, vol. ii. pp. 102. and 166. These curious contemporary annals were written in Persian by Gholam Hossein, a nobleman of India, and first translated into English by a renegade Frenchman, who took the name of Haji Mustapha. His translation, which is now before me, was published at Calcutta in 1789, and comprises three quarto volumes. Another version has been undertaken by Colonel Briggs, in two volumes; of which, however, only the first (London, 1832,) has appeared.

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accorded to the rest. In England, the whole body of twenty-four Directors was renewed by annual election. On such occasions, and indeed on many others, the India House became the scene of the most violent debates, and the keenest party-struggles. There were parties formed on every sub-division of selfish interests; the party of Bombay, the party of Madras, the party of Bengal, the party of Mr. Sulivan, the party of Lord Clive. Greater than all these, perhaps, in point of numbers, was the party anxious only for the high rate and the punctual payment of their Dividends. Nor were these cabals altogether unconnected with the greater parties in the State. Mr. Sulivan, the paramount Director until the appearance of Clive, was supported by Lord Bute. Clive at that time was a follower of Pitt. Thus no one incentive to violence and rancour was wanting from these contests at the India House. At that time every share of 500*l.* conferred a vote, and the manufactory of fictitious votes was carried on to a gigantic scale. Clive, according to his own account, spent in this manner no less a sum than 100,000*l.** It was not till 1765, that this evil practice was arrested by an Act of Parliament, which required that each Proprietor, before he voted, should take an oath that the Stock entered in his name was really and in truth his own, and had been so for the last twelve months.

Sulivan and Clive had not at first been enemies.

* Life by Malcolm, vol. ii. p. 211.

But, as Clive complains, in a private letter:— "Sulivan has never reposed that confidence in me "which my services to the East India Company "entitle me to. The consequence has been that "we have all along behaved to one another like "shy cocks; at times, outwardly expressing great "regard and friendship for each other." * Besides, there was a great divergence in their views of Indian affairs. Sulivan was disposed to favour the gentlemen of Bombay, and Clive the gentlemen of Bengal. Sulivan looked mainly to commerce, and Clive mainly to empire. At last, an open breach ensued between them. In 1763, Clive made a desperately fought attempt to oust Sulivan, and Sulivan's friends, from the Direction. He failed; and the new Directors revenged themselves by confiscating, contrary to law, the Jaghire, or domain, which had been bestowed upon him by Meer Jaffier. It became necessary for Clive to seek relief by a Bill in the Court of Chancery.

Such was the petty warfare raging at the India House, when ship after ship from Bengal brought news of the growing disorganization of the British power, of misrule and plunder by its servants, of renewed hostilities with the native princes. It began to be felt on all sides that the crisis called for Clive,—that he alone could order the confusion and allay the storm. So strong was this feeling in his favour as to carry every thing before it. At a

* To Mr. Vansittart, November 22. 1762.

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meeting of the Proprietors, held early in the spring of 1764, they proposed to the Directors the immediate restitution of the disputed Jaghire, and the appointment of Lord Clive as both Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Bengal. Clive, who was present, rose to speak. "It would be vain for "me," he said, "to exert myself as I ought in "India, if my measures are to be thwarted and "condemned at home, under the influence of a "Chairman who is known to be my personal and "inveterate enemy. It is a matter of indifference "to me who fills the Chair, if Mr. Sulivan does "not; but if he does, I must decline to go." Some reply was attempted by Mr. Sulivan, even amidst the uproar which ensued. He endeavoured to point out the jealousies and heart-burnings which the nomination of Lord Clive might raise among the chiefs already in command. But the tumult around him, if it did not drown his voice, at least overruled his argument. The Directors found themselves, though most unwillingly, compelled to appoint Lord Clive to both the offices desired. It was now within a month of the annual elections; and Clive, in conformity with what he had declared at the last meeting, resolved to abide their issue before he made his decision. The 25th of April was the day of contest. Mr. Sulivan had prepared a list of twenty-three Directors, which he supported by the strenuous exertion of his followers, but at the close, he had not carried more than half his number, and was himself saved from exclusion by only a single vote.

Under these circumstances, not only the Chairman, but also the Deputy-Chairman, was chosen from among Clive's friends. The new Board of Directors, moreover, conferred upon him extraordinary powers. Aided by a Committee of persons of his own naming, he was made, unlike the other Governors, independent of his Council. Clive embarked with the full purpose to use his powers most firmly -- to curb and to crush at once the abuses which prevailed. One of his letters, written on ship-board, speaks as follows: "Give me leave "now to lead you for a few moments into the civil "department. See what an Augean stable is to "be cleaned! The confusion we behold, what "does it arise from? Rapacity and luxury; the "unwarrantable desire of many to acquire in an "instant what only a few can or ought to possess. "Every man would be rich without the merit of "long services; and from this incessant com-"petition, undoubtedly springs that disorder, to "which we must apply a remedy, or be undone; "for it is not only malignant, but contagious." *

In May 1765, after a long protracted passage, Clive landed at Calcutta. There he found another, a recent and a glaring, instance of the abuses which he came to quell. Meer Jaffier had lately died, and a question had arisen respecting his inheritance. One party at his Court declared for his base-born son, and another for his legitimate but infant

* Letter dated April 17. 1765.

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grandson—the child of Meeran, who had been struck dead by lightning some years before. Both parties appealed to the Council at Calcutta, but the Council viewed it only as a matter of bargain and sale. They found it easiest to make terms with the illegitimate pretender. He was proclaimed as Nabob of the province, while they received from him, and divided among themselves, the sum of 140,000*l*. Such a course was directly in the teeth of recent orders from home, binding the servants of the Company for the future to accept no presents from the native princes. And Clive might justly complain, not only of the transaction itself, but also of the headlong haste with which, in order to avert his interference, it had been determined. As he writes to one of the gentlemen concerned in the ignominious bargain: "There could have "been no danger in declining an absolute con- "clusion of the treaty until our arrival, which you "know was expected every day." *

No time was lost by Lord Clive in assembling the Council, showing them the full powers of his Committee, and announcing his peremptory will. One member, Mr. Johnstone, who had been foremost among the new Nabob-makers, attempted a faint demur. "Do you dare to dispute our au- "thority?" asked Clive haughtily. "I never had "the least intention of doing such a thing!" answered the affrighted Johnstone. "Upon this" —as Clive in one of his private letters tells the

* To Mr. Spencer, May 13. 1765.

story — "there was an appearance of very long "and pale countenances, and not one of the Coun- "cil uttered another syllable." Elsewhere he adds: "We arrived on Tuesday, and effected this on "Thursday" — and in the interval Clive had to read over and make himself master of all the recent Minutes of proceedings.*

On the landing of Clive, the war with the native princes was by no means over. Sujah Dowlah lay encamped on the borders of Bahar. He was reinforced by bands both of Mahrattas and of Afghans, and wished to try the issue of another battle. But the name of Clive sounded terrible in his ears. No sooner did he learn that the victor of Plassey had again set foot in India, than he determined on unconditional submission. He informed Meer Cossim and Sombre that he could no longer protect them, and connived at their escape — the one seeking shelter among the Rohillas, the other among the Jauts. Then, dismissing his followers, he repaired to the camp of the English, and declared himself ready to accept whatever terms of peace they might impose.

To adjust these terms, Lord Clive himself repaired to Benares. The design of the Council of Calcutta while they pursued the war, had been to wrest from Sujah Dowlah the whole or greater part of Oude. But such were not the views of the new Governor. Instead of aiming at new conquests, it was wiser, he thought, in the first place to secure

* Life by Malcolm, vol. ii. pp. 321. and 324.

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those already gained by a firmer and sounder tenure. "Let us guard," he said, "against future "evils, by doing for ourselves what no Nabob will "ever do for us."* On this principle he acted. To Sujah Dowlah, who continued to bear the rank and title of Visier, he gave back the greater part of Oude. He reserved only the two districts of Corah and Allahabad as an Imperial domain for Shah Alum, to whom it was also agreed that the Company should make from their revenues an annual payment of twenty-six Lacs of Rupees. On the other hand, he obtained from the fallen Emperor a DEWANNEE or public Deed, conferring on the English Company the sole right of administration throughout the provinces of Bengal, Orissa, and Bahar.

In this transaction, as in almost every other in India during the same period, it is striking how wide was the interval between nominal authority and effective power. Here we find the heir of Aurungzebe treated with as though still supreme, as though able at his pleasure to bestow upon the Europeans, or to withhold from them, the exercise of sovereignty in three great provinces. Yet at this very time, so low had his fortunes fallen, as to leave him destitute of even the common trappings or appurtenances of high state. During the solemn ceremony of the investiture, it was an English dining-table, covered over, that formed the

* To General Carnac, May 3. 1765.

Imperial Throne!* Such was the prince, of whom the English in India continued to call themselves the vassals, whose coin they struck at their mint, whose titles they bore upon their public Seal.

In this transaction, though it manifestly set aside the authority of the Musnud at Moorshedabad, there was no objection raised by the young Nabob. With him, as with most Asiatic despots, the contingent future was but an empty name; and his desire to obtain a fixed and regular income, no longer to be embezzled or diverted by his Ministers, overbalanced every other consideration in his feeble mind. As Lord Clive writes to Mr. Verelst: "He "received the proposal of having a sum of money "for himself and his household at his will with "infinite pleasure, and the only reflection he made "upon leaving me was: 'Thank God! I shall now "'have as many dancing girls as I please!'"†

The sagacious views of Clive, on the contrary, went far beyond his treaty or his time. As he writes to the Directors, we find him urge proposals, all of which have since been carried into effect, but several not until a long course (which his foresight would have spared them) of discord and confusion. We find him recommend that the Governor of Bengal should have a larger salary, but be restrained from trade — that Calcutta should be made the chief seat of the government of India — that a Governor-General should be nominated with the

* Malcolm's Life of Clive, vol. ii. p. 338.

† To Mr. Verelst, July 11. 1765.

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power, in cases of emergency, to take his decision independent of the Council. In a private letter to the Deputy Chairman, he combats the anxiety resulting from such vast provinces to govern beyond so many thousand miles of sea: "With regard to "the magnitude of our possessions be not staggered. "Assure yourself that the Company must either "be what they are or be annihilated." But even without any view as to the future, and looking solely at the present, Lord Clive might boast, that by his treaty he had secured to his countrymen a net revenue annually of 2,000,000*l.* He might boast, that he had freed them from any further dependence on the character or the conduct, the intrigues or the cabals, of the successive heirs of Meer Jaffier, whom he reduced, in fact, to little more than high pensioners of state.

Nevertheless, it formed a part of the policy of Clive, that the whole detail of the revenue departments should still, for some time at least, be directed by a native Prime Minister, resident at Moorshedabad but responsible only to Calcutta. Two competitors appeared for this great office — Nuncomar at the head of the Brahmins—Mahomed Reza Khan at the head of the Mussulmans. There seemed a manifest advantage in preferring the former, as representing by far the greater numbers in race and in religion. Such was also the desire of Clive. But on full examination it appeared that the character of Nuncomar was stained by more than one act of fraud and even forgery. Moreover,

at this very time, as Clive complains, he was seeking to establish a most pernicious influence on the mind of the young Nabob. "It is really "shocking," writes the hero of Plassey, "what a "set of miserable and mean wretches Nuncomar "has placed about him; men who the other day "were horse-keepers." On the whole, therefore, after great deliberation, the choice of Clive fell upon Mahomed Reza Khan.

Having thus dealt with the Hindoos, Clive applied himself to the Europeans. He exacted from the civil servants of the Company a written covenant, pledging them to accept no future presents from the native princes. Many murmured, some resigned, but no one dared to disobey. Another measure which Clive considered most essential, and found most difficult, but which he succeeded in enforcing, was, to debar the men in high places from private trade, granting them, as some compensation, a share in the salt monopoly. With respect to the military officers, Clive announced his intention to deprive them of the large dole or additional allowance, which, under the name of DOUBLE BATTA, had been granted them by Meer Jaffier after the battle of Plassey, but which, as Clive had always explained to them, could not, in all probability, be continued by the Company. In fact, the Court of Directors had issued the most positive orders that the Double Batta should be discontinued. These orders had been several times repeated, but the remonstrances of the army

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had hitherto prevented the Governor and Council from giving them effect. For, according to the bitter sarcasm hurled against them at a later period, the military could not behold without a "virtuous "emulation" the "moderate gains" of the civil service.* In abolishing their Double Batta, Clive had to encounter, not remonstrances merely, nor dissatisfaction, but even mutiny. Nearly two hundred officers, combining together, bound themselves by an oath of secrecy, and undertook to fling up their commissions on one and the same day. It added not a little to the dangers of the league that it was, though in private, instigated by no less a man than Sir Robert Fletcher, the second in command to Clive, who had headed the troops, and with success, in the last campaign. Each officer separately pledged himself under a bond of 500*l.* not to resume his Commission, unless the Double Batta was first restored. In support of those who might be cashiered, a subscription was begun in camp, to which subscription, it is said, that no less than 16,000*l.* were added from the angry civilians at Calcutta.

The idea of the conspirators (for surely they deserve no milder name) was that in a country like India,—held solely by the sword,—Clive could not dispense with their services even for a single day, and must succumb to their demands. Far from daunted, however, Clive set off in person for the

* Speech of Burke on Mr. Fox's East India Bill, December 1. 1783.

camp at Monghir. The heavy rains and the stifling heat delayed his progress; and he was further weighed down by an illness, resulting from fatigue of body and anxiety of mind. But his spirit never for one instant quailed. On his arrival, he assembled and addressed the officers and men, pointing out to them the guilt of their course on public grounds. The points that merely touched himself he passed by with generous disdain. There were two officers accused of declaring that they would attempt to stab or shoot him dead; and words to that effect were certainly used, though as certainly proceeding only from the heat and folly of the moment. Clive declared most justly that he gave no belief whatever to any such design. He was well assured, he said, that he was speaking to Englishmen and not assassins. Several of the officers were touched and reclaimed by his manly firmness. Several others, though but few, had stood by him from the first. The Sepoys, who had ever looked up to him with especial reverence, and comprising some perhaps of the same men who had offered to give up for him their rice at Arcot, cried out that nothing should make them swerve from their English hero, — Sabut Jung.* Clive, on his part, declared that nothing should make him swerve from his fixed purpose. If necessary, he would send for other officers from Madras. If necessary, he would summon clerks at their desks (such as in his outset he

* See vol. iv. p. 456.

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had been) to serve as soldiers. He would do all or any thing rather than yield to mutiny. Thus, while indulgent to the younger and less experienced officers, and willing to receive their tokens of contrition, he ordered the ring-leaders into arrest, and sent them down the Ganges for trial at Calcutta. He did not shrink even from the bold measure of cashiering his second in command.

His letters to the members of his Council at Calcutta breathe a no less determined tone. "I "tell you again; remember to act with the great- "est spirit. If the civilians entertain the officers, "dismiss them the service; and if the latter be- "have with insolence or are refractory, make them "all prisoners and confine them in the new fort. "If you have any thing to apprehend, write me "word, and I will come down instantly and bring "with me the Third Brigade, whose officers and "men can be depended upon."*

By such firmness was averted the shame of a successful mutiny,—a shame which, in Clive's own strong language, all the waters of the Ganges could never wash away. The privates showed no disposition to support their officers, and scarce any of the latter but displayed symptoms of repentance. Of the chiefs of the mutiny at Monghir, who were sent away in boats for trial, many were seen to embark with tears in their eyes. The younger or less guilty officers, who at the outset had been

* Letter to Mr. Verelst, May 28. 1766.

threatened with death if they drew back, now pleaded with the greatest earnestness to be allowed to recall their resignations. In most cases, but always as an act of grace and favour, their humble supplications were allowed, while the remaining vacancies were filled by a judicious choice of subalterns.

All this time the conduct of Clive was giving a lofty example of disregard to lucre. He did not spare his own personal resources, and was able some years afterwards to boast in the House of Commons, that this his second Indian command had left him poorer than it found him. His enemies might indeed observe, that the virtue of disinterestedness is not so hard to practise when a fortune of forty thousand pounds a year has been already gained. Yet still the fact remains, that when presents from one of the native Princes laid the foundations of his wealth the practice of receiving them was both usual and allowed, and that when it ceased to be at least the latter he stood firm against all temptation. In vain did the Rajah of Benares press upon him two diamonds of large size. In vain did the Nabob Visier produce a rich casket of jewels and offer a large sum of money. Lord Clive, thus wrote an officer by no means his friend from India, might then have added at least half a million to his fortune; and we may further note, that the receipt of such gifts might have probably remained a secret, since even their refusal was not known until after his decease.

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In the corrections which Lord Clive applied to both the civil and military services, and in his general course of policy, he had, on some points, no more than fulfilled the positive instructions of the Court of Directors. On other points he obtained their entire approbation. But there were one or two besides on which he did not shrink from the painful duty of daring their displeasure, and standing firm against their peremptory orders. On the whole it may be said, that his second command was not less important for reform than his first had been for conquest. By this, the foundations, at least, of good government were securely laid. And the results might have been far greater still, could Clive have remained longer at his post. But the burning climate, combined with ceaseless anxiety and toil, had grievously impaired his health. In December 1766, we find him during several weeks disabled from all writing, and at the close of the ensuing month he found it necessary to embark for England. He left the government to a man of no more than average ability—Mr. Verelst; yet under him there still continued the impulse given by a stronger hand.

At this period, the main point of interest changes from the Presidency of Bengal to the Presidency of Madras. There, the English were becoming involved in another war. There, they had now, for the first time, to encounter the most skilful and daring of all the enemies against whom they ever fought in India — Hyder Ali. He was of humble

origin, the grandchild of a wandering FAKIR or Mahomedan monk. Most versatile in his talents, Hyder was no less adventurous in his career; by turns a private man devoted to sports of the chase, a captain of freebooters, a partisan-chief, a rebel against the Rajah of Mysore, and commander-in-chief of the Mysorean army. Of this last position he availed himself to dethrone and supplant his master. Indeed, during his whole course, we seldom find him either restrained by scruples or bound by promises. One single instance of the kind will suffice to paint his character. A Brahmin, Khonde Row by name, at one time his close confederate, but afterwards his enemy, having taken the field against him, was reduced to the point of surrender. The Rajah and the ladies of the palace sent a joint message to Hyder, pleading for their friend the Brahmin, and inquiring what terms he might expect. "I will not only spare his life," said Hyder, "but I will cherish him like a parroquet." Nevertheless, no sooner was the Brahmin in his hands than he was treated with the utmost rigour, and imprisoned for the remainder of his life in an iron cage. When Hyder was thereupon gently reminded of his promise, he answered, that he had literally kept his word, referring in proof to the cage in which the captive was confined, and to the rice and milk allotted for his daily food! *

* Colonel Wilks's Historical Sketches of the South of India, vol. i. p. 434. Sir John Malcolm, in his first mission to Teheran, gives an account of *Tooter*, a young dancing-girl from

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Pursuing his ambitious schemes, Hyder Ali became, not merely the successor of the Rajah, but the founder of the kingdom of Mysore. From his palace at Seringapatam, as from a centre, a new energy was infused through the whole of Southern India. By various wars and by the dispossession of several smaller princes, he extended his frontiers to the northward, nearly to the river Kistna. His posts on the coasts of Malabar, Mangalore especially, gave him the means of founding a marine; and he applied himself with assiduous skill to train and discipline his troops according to the European models. The English at Madras were roused by his ambition, without as yet fully appreciating his genius. We find them at the beginning of 1767 engaged, with little care or forethought, in a confederacy against him with the Nizam and the Mahrattas. Formidable as that confederacy might seem, it was speedily dissipated by the arts of Hyder. At the very outset, a well-timed subsidy bought off the Mahrattas. The Nizam showed no better faith; he was only more tardy in his treason. He took the field in concert with a body of English commanded by Colonel Joseph Smith, but soon began to show symptoms of defection, and at last drew off his troops to join the army of Hyder. A battle ensued near Trinomalee, in September 1767. Colonel Smith had under him no more than 1,500

Shiraz, and a favourite of the Shah. "*Tootee*," adds Sir John, 'is the Persian word for a parrot, a bird which is proverbial, "in Persian tales for its knowledge and habits of attachment." (Sketches of Persia, p. 221., ed. 1845.)

Europeans and 9,000 Sepoys; while the forces combined on the other side were estimated, probably with much exaggeration, at 70,000 men. Nevertheless, Victory, as usual, declared for the English cause. The Nizam in this action showed himself destitute alike of conduct and of courage. At the outset, he had valiantly cried: "Sooner than yield, "I would share the fate of Nazir Jung." * Yet within an hour afterwards, the Indian prince was in full gallop to the westward; and his troops proved perfectly worthy of such a chief. Almost the only instance of spirit in his army was displayed by one of the ladies of his palace. These he had brought with him on a train of elephants, as spectators of his expected triumph. In his own panic he ordered that these elephants also should be turned for flight. Then, from one of the covered canopies a woman's voice was heard: "This elephant has not been "taught so to turn; he follows the standard of the "empire." Accordingly, though the English shot was falling thick around her, the female assertor of the honour of the empire would not allow her elephant to be drawn aside until first the standard had passed.†

On the other hand, the troops of Hyder Ali, both then and afterwards, displayed not merely the effects of a braver chief and of a better discipline,

* See vol. iv. of this history, p. 150.

† Wilks's South of India, vol. ii. p. 38. I am sorry to spoil the story, but it appears that "the loss of several elephants was "the consequence of this damsel's demur."

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but also the energies of a robuster race. The people within the Ghauts or hill-passes of Southern India, though far below the mountain races of Afghan, are yet far superior to the Hindoos of the plains. In these, the delicacy of limbs and the softness of muscles must be reckoned among the foremost causes of their failure on a battle-field. In these, the utter want of strength in their bodily organisation is only, on some occasions and for some purposes, redeemed by its suppleness. It has been computed, that two English sawyers can perform in one day the work of thirty-two Indians. Yet, as the same authority assures us, see the same men as tumblers, and there are none so extraordinary in the world. Or employ them as messengers, and they will go fifty miles a day for twenty or thirty days without intermission.*

Our victory at Trinomalee produced as its speedy consequence a treaty of peace with the Nizam. Hyder was left alone; but even thus proved fully a match for the English both of Madras and of Bombay. The latter had fitted out a naval armament which, in the course of the winter, reduced his sea-port of Mangalore and destroyed his rising fleet. Against these new enemies Hyder, like some wild beast at bay, made a sudden bound. Leaving to the eastward a force sufficient to employ and delude Colonel Joseph Smith, he silently descended the western Ghauts, and in May 1768, at the very

* See an Essay by Mr. Orme, in his Historical Fragments of the Mogul Empire, p. 463.

time when least expected, appeared before the gates of Mangalore. The English garrison taken by surprise, hastily re-embarked in boats, relinquishing all their artillery and stores, and leaving also more than two hundred sick and wounded to the mercy, or rather the politic forbearance, of their crafty foe.

Returning to the eastward, Hyder Ali continued to wage the war against Colonel Smith; inferior on any field of battle, but prevailing in wiles and stratagems, in early intelligence, and in rapid marches. He could not be prevented from laying waste the southern plains of the Carnatic, as the territory of one of the staunchest allies of England, Mahomed Ali, the Nabob of Arcot. Through such ravages, the British troops often underwent severe privations. Moreover, Colonel Smith was trammelled by the same system so often and so justly complained of in the wars of Marlborough — the appointment of field-deputies. Two members of the Council of Madras had been sent into his camp with full powers to control — that is, to clog and thwart — his operations.

At length, in the spring of 1769, Hyder Ali became desirous of peace, and resolved to extort it on favourable terms. First, by a dexterous feint he drew off the British forces a hundred and forty miles to the southward of Madras. Then suddenly, at the head of five thousand horsemen, Hyder himself appeared at St. Thomas's Mount, within ten miles of that city. The terrified Mem-

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bers of the Council already, in their mind's eye, saw their country-houses given up to plunder and to flame, and were little inclined to dispute whatever might be asked by an enemy so near at hand. Happily his terms were not high. A treaty was signed, providing that a mutual restoration of conquests should take place, and that the contracting parties should agree to assist each other in all defensive wars.

In the career of Hyder Ali, this was by no means the first, nor yet the last occasion, on which he showed himself sincerely desirous of alliance with the English. He did not conceal the fact, that, in order to maintain his power and secure himself, he must lean either on them or on the Mahrattas. He would have preferred the first; it was the vacillation and weakness of the council at Madras that drove him to the latter. Finding his overtures of friendship slighted, he took his part, as always, decidedly and boldly. He became, even in the midst of peace, a known and ardent enemy of the English race and name; ever watchful for any opening to assail them; ever ready to league himself against them with the Mahratta chiefs at Poona, or the French Governors at Pondicherry.

It was no common enemy whom the Madras traders (who could, at that period call them statesmen?) thus neglected or defied. The vigorous administration of Hyder at his Court of Seringapatam, has been closely viewed and well described by more than one European in his service. Like the other

Indian Princes, he was addicted to licentious pleasure. Unlike them, he was never enslaved by it. Many of his leisure hours were passed in the company of dancing girls. To intoxication likewise he was often prone; and one instance is recorded, how, in that state, he was seen by his whole Court to seize and most severely cane his grown-up son, Tippoo. It may be added, that, on common occasions, his toilet took up a considerable portion of his time. But no sooner did any peril threaten, or any object of ambition rise in view, than all such habits of indulgence were promptly cast aside; and Hyder passed whole days and nights untired in his council-chambers, or on horseback with his cavalry. At all times he was most easy of access; freely receiving all those who desired to see him, except only the Fakirs; a significant token of the degree of esteem in which he held his grandfather's profession. From all others he quickly drew whatever information he desired; and in dealing with them, manifested the keenest insight of their various characters. So far had his education been neglected, that he could neither read nor write. He made no later attempt at scholarship, but relied upon the powers of a most retentive memory, and upon a shrewdness hard to be deceived. He might be careless of his people's welfare for their sake, but he anxiously sought it for his own; he knew that to make them prosperous would, beyond all other causes, make him powerful; and thus through the wide extent of the kingdom that he founded, he

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never failed to guard them from all vague depredation or inferior tyranny.

By such means did he who had first set forth as a freebooter, with one or two score of followers, leave behind him at his peaceful end a well-appointed army of a hundred thousand soldiers, and a treasure of three millions sterling. Yet, prosperous as he seemed, Hyder was not happy. It is recorded of one of his attendants, that after watching for some time his short and uneasy slumbers, he ventured at his waking to inquire of his dreams. "Believe "me, my friend," said Hyder, "my dominion, envied "though it may be, is in truth far less desirable "than the state of the YOGEES (the religious men- "dicants); awake, they see no conspirators; asleep, "they dream of no assassins!" *

In this war with Hyder, the English had lost no great amount of reputation, and of territory they had lost none at all. But as regards their wealth and their resources, they had suffered severely. Supplies, both of men and of money, had been required from Bengal, to assist the government at Madras; and both had been freely given. In consequence of such a drain, there could not be made the usual investments in goods, nor yet the usual remittances

* The character and habits of Hyder Ali are described in his History by M. Le Maitre de La Tour, a Frenchman, who had commanded his artillery. Some considerable extracts from that work will be found in the Annual Register for 1784 (part ii. pp. 18—27.), and may be compared with various passages in Colonel Wilks's work (especially vol. i. pp. 247. and 351., and vol. ii. p. 142.)

to England. Thus at the very time when the proprietors of the East India Company had begun to wish each other joy on the great reforms effected by Lord Clive, and looked forward to a further increase of their half-yearly Dividend, they were told to prepare for its reduction. A panic ensued. Within a few days, in the spring of 1769, India Stock fell above sixty per cent.*

At that period, indeed, as for some years before it, nothing could be more unsteady than the wishes, or more precarious than the prospects, of the great Company. Party-spirit continued to rage at their elections; the contests between the followers of Sulivan and the followers of Clive being renewed every year with varying success. Each party, when defeated, heaped the grossest imputations on the other, as on the lowest and basest of mankind; and in that respect the public were inclined to give an equal belief to both. In such a state of things the very existence of the Company seemed to hang upon the breath of any great man in Parliament. Thus was Lord Clive, while still in India, addressed by one of his principal agents in England, Mr. Walsh:—"I am very sorry you did not write a "few lines to Mr. Pitt, to conciliate him to your "negotiations. I spoke a few words to him just "as he left the House of Commons, and whilst he "was getting on his great coat. . . . . He an- "swered me that he had heard of the great things "you had done; that you had gained much honour,

* Ann. Reg. 1769, p. 53.

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"but that they were too vast. . . . . One word "from him would go far in making or unmaking "the Company."* This was in May 1766, while Pitt was still a private Member of Parliament; but when, in the July following, he became Prime Minister, with the title of Chatham, still far greater importance, of course, attached to his opinions. In a former chapter I have fully shown how he entered office with the fixed determination to take into our own hands the government of our Eastern empire; how his purpose was baffled, not through any efforts of the East India Company, but through his own mysterious illness; and how the men succeeding him in power, though unable to pursue his policy, were reduced merely to stave off the main question, or to patch up temporary terms. But they, for their own part, were well satisfied, since the Company undertook, meanwhile, to pay to the revenue 400,000*l.* each year. As a further concession, arising from the financial embarrassments of 1769, it was agreed by the Directors that Commissioners of inquiry, under the name of Supervisors, should be sent to India with full powers over the other servants of the Company. Three gentlemen of old standing and long service — Mr. Vansittart, Mr. Scrafton, and Colonel Ford — were selected for this important trust. Accordingly they embarked on their mission towards the close of the same year. But after leaving the Cape of Good Hope, the ship in which they sailed, the Aurora frigate, was never

* Life by Malcolm, vol. iii. p. 189.

heard of again: it is supposed to have foundered at sea.

It is not improbable that this system of make-shifts might have still continued, and the necessity of any more decisive measures been longer post-poned. But in the ensuing year, 1770, a new and more grievous calamity overspread Bengal. The usual rains having failed, there was no water in the tanks, and the rivers shrank into shallows. The rice-fields continued parched and dry, and could not yield their expected produce, while the con-flagration of several large granaries completed the work of misery. A terrible famine ensued; a famine such as Europe, during the last few ages, has never known even in its rudest districts, or behind beleaguered walls. Throughout the wide valley of the Ganges, the country places were deserted, and the cities, where alone there might be hope of food, became thronged with starving multitudes, from whom piteous cries were heard. The common misery united, for the first and only time, the men of the most opposite castes—from the Brahmin of lofty lineage down to the humblest of the Niaidees.* Even the Zenana now gave forth its guarded inmates, who, no longer veiled

* The Niaidees were described a few years since in a Report from Mr. Conolly, Collector of Revenue in Malabar. "They 'are supposed to be the descendants of a Brahmin excommuni-"cated many centuries ago; and they are regarded as outcasts "even by the slaves, whom they are not allowed to approach "within forty paces." (Despatch to the Government of Ma-dras, May 7. 1845. MS.)

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with jealous care, but prostrate and wailing on the ground, implored from the passers by, if not for themselves, at least for their little children, a handful—only a handful—of rice. Thousands and tens of thousands of human beings died daily in the streets, where the vultures swooped down and the dogs and jackals flocked in quest of their ghastly prey. In Calcutta alone there were daily employed one hundred men, on the Company's account, to pile the dead bodies upon sledges and cars, and throw them into the Ganges. The broad river was itself so far tainted that its fish ceased to be wholesome food. Hogs, ducks, and geese, which had likewise taken part in devouring the carcases, could no longer themselves be safely eaten; and thus, as the famine grew greater, the means of subsistence, even to the Europeans, grew less. It was computed, not in any rhetorical flight, not amidst the horror of the sufferings described, but in a grave despatch written two years afterwards, though even then perhaps with some exaggeration, that through Bengal this dreadful famine had destroyed in many places one half, and, on the whole, above one third, of the inhabitants.* These evil tidings from India did not come alone. Conjoined with them were

* Letter of the Governor and Council, Nov. 3. 1772, and Mr. Burke's Articles of Charge, xv. part i. It is remarkable that Mr. Mill, while devoting several large tomes to the History of British India, dismisses two of the most striking and important events of their time,—the Massacre of Patna, and the famine of Bengal,—in one sentence each! (Vol. iii. pp. 346. and 486., ed. 1840.) Thanks to Professor H. H. Wilson, these

rumours and charges that the distress had been greatly aggravated by the conduct of the Company's servants; that at the very outset of the famine they had engrossed all the rice of the country, and that afterwards they slowly doled it out at tenfold the price they had paid. If in truth there were any such cases, they can have been but few. They were in direct contravention of the Directors' orders, and of Lord Clive's rules. For my part, indeed, I strongly incline to the belief that, looking to the whole of this dismal period, and waiving, perhaps, some rare exceptions, the Hindoos were benefited, and so far as relief was possible, relieved, by the presence among them of their civilised and Christian rulers. Charges like these made against the latter, are common among every rude people at every dispensation of Providence. If there be a pestilence, they complain that the springs were poisoned by the malice of their enemies. If there be a famine, they feel sure that the grain has been fraudulently hoarded and usuriously dispensed.

Such charges, however, could not fail to make some impression on both the Ministry and Parliament of England. Even allowing them to be unfounded, there was yet an ample growth of abuses, rank and stubborn, to hew down in the Company's affairs. It was felt on all sides that there was more need than ever of investigation—more need and now more leisure also. The government of Lord

volumes are now enriched by many excellent notes and useful emendations.

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North had by this time attained some degree of stability, and the nation some degree of repose. In the first place some legislation (perhaps to prevent any other more effective) was attempted by Mr. Sulivan, who had once more become the Deputy Chairman of the Company. It was answered that as yet there was not sufficient information. Accordingly, in April 1772, and on the motion of General Burgoyne, there was appointed, by means of ballot, a Committee of Inquiry, bearing the title of "Select," though consisting of no less than thirty-one Members. Within six weeks that Committee prepared and presented two Reports; but the approaching close of the Session precluded any further step at that time.

Parliament met again in November the same year. Yet, during that short interval, the affairs of the Company had greatly altered for the worse. So low had their credit sunk with the Bank of England, that they found it necessary to apply to the First Lord of the Treasury for a loan of at least a million sterling. The Minister received their application coldly, and said that he should leave it to the decision of Parliament. Accordingly, at the very commencement of the new Session, Lord North moved for, and carried, a Secret Committee of thirteen Members to be chosen by ballot, and to take into their consideration the whole state of the Company's affairs. At the same time he agreed that the Select Committee of the preceding Session should be revived.

The Directors, trembling at the prospect of inquiry by others, and eager, if they could, to stifle or suppress it by an inquiry of their own, had already passed a Resolution, to send out to India, at their sole expense, a new Batch of Supervisors. But the alertness of the Secret Committee defeated this manœuvre. Within ten days a report to the House of Commons pointed out that the step designed by the Directors might prove a serious obstacle in the way of Parliament, and recommended therefore that Parliament should interpose to arrest it. A Bill was accordingly brought in, to restrain, for a limited time, the East India Company from appointing Supervisors in India. To this measure the Directors and their friends in the House offered all the opposition in their power. Burke, who was then upon their side, went so far as to exclaim, "Shame upon such proceedings! "Here is an end to confidence and public faith!" With better reason and more temper, Lord North disclaimed all grounds of personal hostility. "It "is our wish," he said, "to make the East India "Company a great and glorious Company, and settle "it upon a permanent foundation." * Under such patronage the Bill was passed by large majorities.

This Bill, however, could only be deemed, as a lawyer might have termed it, an arrest of judgment. Later during the same Session, in the spring of 1773, Lord North proposed and carried through, against all gainsayers, his own measure of reform.

* Parl. Hist. vol. xvii. pp. 561. and 567.

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This, after it had passed, was commonly called the Regulating Act. In the first place, he granted to the Company a loan of 1,500,000*l.* for four years, and relieved them from the annual payment to the State of 400,000*l.* On the other hand, the Company was restrained from making any greater dividend than six per cent. until the loan should be repaid, or any greater dividend than eight per cent. until the public should have some participation in the profits. It was then enacted, that instead of annual elections of the whole number of Directors at the India House, six should go out of office each year, and none keep their seats longer than four years. At the same time, the qualification for a vote in each proprietor was raised from 500*l.* to 1000*l.*, with more votes in proportion, up to four, to each proprietor of a larger sum.

In India, the Act provided that the Mayor's Court of Calcutta should be restricted in its jurisdiction to petty cases of trade, and that in its place should be constituted a Supreme Court, to consist of a Chief Justice, and three Puisne Judges, appointed by the Crown. The Governor of Bengal was henceforth to have authority over the other Presidencies, as Governor-General of India, but was himself to be controlled by his Council. In that Council, as previously, he was entitled only to a single or, in case of equality, a casting vote. It was proposed that these nominations, should be made by Parliament, and continue for five years; after which they should revert to the Directors,

but subject to the approbation of the Crown. In the progress therefore of the Bill through the Commons, the Members of the new Council were expressly named, so as to become a part of the enactment. Warren Hastings, who a year before had assumed the administration of Bengal, was appointed the first Governor-General. Another of the new Council, Richard Barwell, was already at his post; the new Members to be sent from England were General Clavering, the Hon. Colonel Monson, and Philip Francis.

Another clause of Lord North's Bill remitted the drawback on the East India Company's Teas —a step so little regarded at its outset, but so momentous in its consequences, and which has been fully treated in another place.* The Directors at the time were but little gratified with this boon, or any other, when compared with the curtailment of their previous powers. They declared, in a petition to the House, that they would rather forego the loan which they had solicited, than endure the conditions which the Minister imposed. But their late misgovernment had been such as to render, in Parliament at least, their adherents few and their lamentations disregarded.

In the course of these proceedings, both before the Committees and within the House, many a shaft was let fly at Lord Clive. Besides the public wrongs of which he stood accused, there was also, it may be feared, a feeling of personal envy at

* See vol. v. of this history, p. 480.

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work against him. His vast wealth became a more striking mark for calumny when contrasted with the financial embarrassments of the Directors in whose service he had gained it. And his profusion, as ever happens, offended far more persons than it pleased. He had bought the noble seat of Claremont from the Duchess Dowager of Newcastle, and was improving it at lavish cost. He had so far invested money in the smaller boroughs that he could reckon on bringing into Parliament a retinue of six or seven friends and kinsmen.* Under such circumstances the Select Committee, over which Burgoyne presided, made Clive their more especial object of attack. They drew forth into the light of day several transactions certainly not well formed to bear it, as the forgery of Admiral Watson's signature, and the fraud practised on Omichund. But at the same time they could not shut out the lustre of the great deeds he had performed. Clive himself was unsparingly questioned, and treated with slight regard. As he complains, in one of his speeches: "I, their humble servant, "the Baron of Plassey, have been examined by "the Select Committee more like a sheep-stealer "than a Member of this House!" And he adds, with perfect truth: "I am sure, Sir, if I had any "sore places about me, they would have been found: "they have probed me to the bottom; no lenient "plasters have been applied to heal; no, Sir, they

* Letter to Mr. Call, January 19. 1768. Malcolm's Life, vol. iii. p. 219.

"were all of the blister kind, prepared with Spanish flies, and other provocatives!"

On this and some other occasions Clive spoke in his own defence in a frank and fearless spirit, with great energy of language, and, it would seem, with great effect upon the House. He was likewise happy in the friendship and assistance of Mr. Wedderburn, then Solicitor General. It was in May, 1773, that the charges against him, till then vague and undefined, were brought forward as a vote of censure by Burgoyne. To the Government it became an open question. The Attorney General spoke strongly on the side of the accusers. The Solicitor General conducted the defence. A great number of placemen and King's Friends took the part of Clive, while the Prime Minister, Lord North, walked into the lobby against him. In the result, the first Resolutions of Burgoyne, alleging certain matters of fact that could scarcely be denied, were carried. But the next, which charged Lord Clive by name with having abused his powers, and set an evil example to the servants of the public, did not pass. At length, as the dawn was slowly breaking on the last of these long and stormy, and in many parts confused, debates, the House agreed almost unanimously to some words which Wedderburn moved: "That Robert Lord Clive did at the "same time render great and meritorious services "to his country."

Such a vote might perhaps be deemed almost a verdict of acquittal. Certainly, at least, it showed

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a wise reluctance to condemn. It closed the whole case, and Clive had no further Parliamentary attack to fear. But the previous taunts and injuries appear to have sunk deep into his haughty mind. Nor was a life of ease, however splendid, congenial to his active temper. In his sumptuous halls of Claremont, or beneath the stately cedars of his park, he was far less really happy than amidst his former toils and cares, on the tented plains of the Carnatic or in the council-chambers of Bengal. Moreover, through the climate of the tropics, his health was most grievously impaired. He had to undergo sharp and oft-recurring spasms of pain, for which opium only could afford him its treacherous and transitory aid. At length, in November 1774, at his house in Berkeley Square, this great man, for such he surely was, fell by his own hand. He was not yet fifty years of age; and the contest in North America was just then beginning to hold forth to him a new career of active exertion, — a new chaplet of honourable fame.

To the last, however, he appears to have retained his serene demeanour, and the stern dominion of his will. It so chanced, that a young lady, an attached friend of his family, was then upon a visit at his house in Berkeley Square, and sat, writing a letter, in one of its apartments. Seeing Lord Clive walk through, she called to him to come and mend her pen. Lord Clive obeyed her summons, and taking out his penknife fulfilled her request; after

which, passing on to another chamber, he turned the same knife against himself. This tale, though traditional, has a high contemporary voucher. It was related by the Earl of Shelburne, afterwards the first Marquis of Lansdowne, to the person from whom I received it.

CHAPTER LXVIII.

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Warren Hastings, the first Governor-General of India, was born in 1732. He was sprung from a branch, or rather, as they alleged, the main stem, of the great old house of Hastings, from which in another line the Earls of Huntingdon descend. But at the time of little Warren's birth, his branch was fast decaying; and Daylesford, its ancient seat in Worcestershire, was already sold. It was only through the kindness of a kinsman that he obtained his education at Westminster School; and when that relative died he was shipped off at seventeen as a Writer to Bengal. He was noticed by Lord Clive as a man of promise. Under Mr. Vansittart he had much more opportunity to shine. Thus, through the various gradations of the Civil Service at that time, he sped with credit and success. Having married, but become a widower, he returned to England in 1765. But four years afterwards he was again sent forth as second in the Council of Madras; and early in 1772 he proceeded to a far higher, and, as it proved, more lasting post, as first in the Council of Bengal.

Spare in form and shrunk in features, with a mild voice and with gentle manners, Warren Hastings might seem to a casual observer as wanting in manly firmness. It is remarkable that, on his appointment as Governor of Bengal, Lord Clive deemed it right to warn him against this, as he imagined, the weak point of his character. "I thought," — thus writes Lord Clive from England, — "I discovered in you "a diffidence in your own judgment and too great "an easiness of disposition, which may subject you "insensibly to be led where you ought to guide."* Never was an error more complete. Among the many qualities, good and evil, which distinguished Hastings through the thirteen years of his eventful rule, there was none more marked and striking than his unvarying determination, and resolute fixedness of purpose. With but few partakers of his councils and, perhaps, none of his full confidence, he formed his purpose singly, and, once formed, adhered to it as to the compass of his course; — regarding as nought delay of time, or variety of means, or change of instruments, so long as the aim was kept in view and by degrees attained.

One strong instance of this tenacity of purpose is recorded by Hastings himself in the chit-chat of his later years. He was telling of a streamlet which skirts the domain of Daylesford, and also the village of Churchill, his dwelling-place in childhood, and which thence flows onwards to join the Isis at Cotswold. "To lie beside the margin of that stream

* Letter, August 1, 1771. Life by Malcolm, vol. iii. p. 260.

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" and muse, was," said Mr. Hastings, " one of my " favourite recreations; and there one bright sum- " mer's day, when I was scarcely seven years old, " I well remember that I first formed the determi- " nation to purchase back Daylesford. I was then " quite dependent upon those who were themselves " scarcely raised above want; yet somehow or other " the child's dream, as it did not appear unreason- " able at the moment, so in after years it never " faded away. God knows there were times in my " career, when to accomplish that or any other " object of honourable ambition, seemed to be im- " possible, but I have lived to accomplish this." *

Indeed it may be said of Hastings, that tenacity of purpose was not merely the principal feature of his character, but the key and main-spring of the rest. It made him, on the one hand, consistent and courageous, and with views of policy far beyond the passing hour; not easily perplexed by doubts or cast down by reverses; and worthy in all respects the inscription beneath his portrait, as it hangs to this day in the council-chamber of Calcutta: MENS ÆQUA IN ARDUIS. On the other hand, it gave him a certain hardness and insensibility of heart; it made him, on several great occasions in his long career, callous to the sufferings which his policy

* Memoirs of Warren Hastings, by the Rev. G. R. Gleig, vol. i. p. 9. ed. 1841. In this work the comments on each transaction are those of a zealous advocate for Hastings, but it contains many extracts, judiciously made, and of great value, from Hastings's private correspondence.

inflicted, and careless of the means by which his policy might be pursued. He was firm, it may be added, in all his friendships and attachments, but few men have ever been more rancorous and unforgiving.

It was one among the merits of Hastings, that he had made himself thoroughly acquainted, not only with the literature, but also with the temper and feelings, of the nations which he came to rule. Their languages he spoke with ease and fluency; their prejudices, whether of religion or of race, he was ever, unless impelled by some state-necessity, studious not to wound. By such means he was at all times, whether in his triumphs or in his hours of danger and distress, a favourite with the native tribes of Hindostan — a favourite, moreover, at a period when in most cases they had little or no sympathy for the island-strangers. Bishop Heber was told by one of his Mussulman attendants, that he well remembered the time when all black people ran away from a white face; and when the appearance of a single European soldier struck a whole village with affright. "They used to them now," he added, "they know they no harm do!" *

It was not merely Oriental knowledge that Hastings had acquired. At Westminster School he had deeply embued his mind with classic lore. "What! "lose Warren — lose the best scholar of his year!" had the Head-Master, Dr. Nichols, cried with generous spirit, when the boy's appointment for Bengal

* Bishop Heber's Journal, June 24. 1824.

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was first announced to him. "That will not do at "all. Let him remain, and he shall go on with his "education at my charge." * Highly cultivated minds are often wanting in strength; and strong minds are as often wanting in high cultivation; so often, indeed, that in many cases the strength and the cultivation may, I fear, be deemed not only distinct but even in some degree repugnant to each other. But with Hastings, as with intellects of the highest order, they were well and happily combined. Through the long course of his despatches, more especially the later ones, his graceful and flowing sentences, so sustained in their equal dignity, so devoid of mere rhetorical glitter, and despising or seeming to despise all ornaments but such as the argument itself supplies and needs, seem worthy to be, and in India have often been, a model for state-papers.

At Westminster School little Warren was in the same class with Impey, who afterwards pursued the profession of the law, and, under the Regulating Act of 1773, was sent forth as Sir Elijah, and Chief Justice, to Bengal. It was on Impey, as we shall see hereafter, that the fortunes of Hastings more than once depended. Another of his boyish playmates was the poet Cowper. It is worthy of remark —if a short digression may be here allowed me— how often great and famous houses misunderstand the true sources of their fame. Of all the long line of Hastings, from that Danish Sea King of

* Memoirs by Gleig, vol. i. p. 13.

whom they claim descent, down to that Marquis, best known perhaps as Earl of Moira, who in our own age worthily upheld their ancient name, no one has filled so large a space in the eyes of men as the first Governor-General of India. Thus also, without disparagement to an upright and accomplished Chancellor, it may be said that of all the Cowpers the author of "The Task" is the foremost; since thousands and tens of thousands who never even heard of the statesman, have delighted in the strains of the poet. Yet neither Cowper, in his secluded toils for fame, nor Hastings when battling with his rivals for the administration of an empire, appear to have received the slightest notice or token of approval from their noble kinsmen. Neither the Earl Cowper, nor yet the Earl of Huntingdon of those days, so far as can be traced, at any time expressed at Olney or at Calcutta the least desire to establish a friendly correspondence, or obtain an authentic likeness. Thus at present, as I believe, no contemporary portrait of the greatest of the Cowpers is shown at Panshanger. None of the greatest of the Hastings is shown at Castle Donington.

When in the year 1772 Hastings first assumed the administration of Bengal, he found the whole country weighed down by the effects of the recent famine and depopulation. The greatest praise, perhaps, of his able rule, is the simple fact that scarce any trace of these effects appears in the succeeding years. He enforced a new system in

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the land revenue founded on leases for five years; a system far indeed from faultless, yet the best, probably, which at that period could be framed. Under that system nearly the same amount of income was collected from the far diminished numbers with less, it would seem, of pressure than before. For the accumulating debt and financial embarrassment of the Company more than the common resources seemed to be required. These Hastings strove hard to supply, not always, as will presently be shown, by the most creditable means. At the same time, to the great and manifest advantage of the natives, he put an end to the oppressive tax or duty levied upon marriages. As one of the results of his system of revenue-collection, he established, with signal good effect, district courts for the administration of justice, and district officers to maintain the public peace. Within a few months the provinces were in a great measure cleared of the DECOITS or gangs of thieves, and other prowling marauders. These and such like measures of reform, or of public policy, were carried through by Hastings amidst numerous objections in his council and incessant calls upon his time. Thus at the close of his first half year, he writes to a familiar friend: "Here I am with arrears of months, and some of "years, to bring up; with the courts of justice "and offices of revenue to set a going; with "the official reformation to resume and complete; ". . . . . with the current trifles of the day, "notes, letters, personal applications; every man's

"business of more consequence than any other, and "complainants from every quarter of the province "hallooing me by hundreds for justice as often "as I put my head out of window, or venture "abroad!" *

Among the earliest acts of Hastings, in Bengal, was one for which, right or wrong, he was in no degree responsible. It arose from the peremptory and positive commands of the Directors at home. Mahomed Reza Khan had now for seven years held his great office, at Moorshedabad, as NAIB DEWAN, or chief Minister of the finances. During that time he had perhaps committed faults; he had certainly contracted enmities. But the reports against him of embezzlement and fraud in his high functions appear to have arisen mainly through the intrigues of Nuncomar, his disappointed rival. These reports, however, wrought so far on the Court of Directors, that they sent express instructions to Hastings, concurrently with his own appointment, to secure Mahomed Reza Khan, together with his family and his adherents, and to detain them in custody until his accounts should be examined. Hastings, thus at the outset of his power, could not have ventured to disobey such orders, even if his judgment disapproved them. He took his measures accordingly with promptitude and skill. Mahomed Reza Khan was seized in his bed at midnight by a battalion of Sepoys. The same measure was extended to his confederate,

* Letter to Josias Dupré, October 8. 1772.

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Schitab Roy, at that time Governor of Bahar; a chief who, in the recent wars, had fought with signal bravery upon the English side. The two prisoners were carried to Calcutta, where, after many months of postponement and delay, they were brought to trial before a Committee, over which Hastings himself presided. Nuncomar, with a vengeful rancour, such as no time could soften, no calamities subdue, appeared as the accuser of his ancient rival. But no guilt could be proved to call for any further punishment, nor even to justify the harshness already shown. Both prisoners, therefore, were acquitted and set free; Schitab Roy, moreover, being sent back to hold office in Bahar, clothed in a robe of state and mounted on a richly caparisoned elephant, as marks of honour and respect.*

Nuncomar throve as little in his hopes of ambition as in his projects of revenge. Hastings had meanwhile been effecting a complete change in the former system. It was not merely that he arrested the Minister, he abolished the office. He put an end to the scheme of double government at Moorshedabad and at Calcutta, transferring to the latter city and to the servants of the Company the entire machinery of state affairs. An empty pageant only was left at the former capital, still decked with the name and honours of Nabob. That Nabob,

* See a note by Professor Wilson, correcting some errors both of fact and date in Mr. Mill (History of India, vol. iii. p. 545., ed. 1840.)

the heir of Meer Jaffier, was now an infant. On that plea, Hastings took occasion to reduce the yearly allowance granted by the Company from 320,000*l.* to half that sum. To alleviate in some degree the disappointment that was gnawing at the heart of Nuncomar, his son, Rajah Goordas, was appointed Treasurer of the young Prince's Household. The guardianship of the young Prince himself was bestowed, not on his own mother, but on another lady of his father's Haram — the Munny Begum, by title and name. This last choice afforded at a later period strong grounds for complaints and cavils against Hastings. Why, it was asked, in such a country, where the female sex is held in so slight esteem, select any woman for that charge; and if any, why overlook a parent's rightful claim? There was nothing in the life or character of the Munny Begum to entitle her to any especial trust; she had been a dancing girl, and as such only had attracted the favour of the old Nabob. But on the other hand, it is to be observed, that her appointment, when proposed by Hastings to the Members of the Council, obtained from them a full and unanimous approval. They state in their Minutes on the subject: "She is said to "have acquired a great ascendant over the spirit "of the Nabob, being the only person of whom he "stands in any kind of awe, — a circumstance "highly necessary for fulfilling the chief part of "her duty, in directing his education and conduct "which appear to have been hitherto much neg-

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"lected." There is another reason, which, in the midst of the Moorshedabad arrests, had probably still more weight with Hastings, but which he reserves for a private letter to the Secret Committee of Directors, namely, that the Munny Begum was "the declared enemy" of Mahomed Reza Khan.*

External affairs also claimed the early care of Hastings. Shah Alum, the Emperor, in name at least, of Hindostan, had more than once endeavoured, but in vain, to prevail upon the English to assist him in expelling the Mahrattas. Finding that alone he could not attack these invaders of his patrimony with the smallest prospect of success, he took the opposite part, and threw himself into their arms. He was received at first with every token of respect and homage, and led back in triumph to his ancestral seat of Delhi. Soon, however, and of course, a quarrel ensued between them, when he found himself no more than a prisoner and a puppet in the hands of his new allies. They compelled him to sign an edict, transferring to them the districts of Allabahad and Corah, which had been bestowed upon him by Lord Clive. But here Hastings interposed. He determined not merely on resuming the districts of Allabahad and Corah, but on discon-

* Minutes of Council, July 11. 1772. See also in Mr. Gleig's Memoirs, the letter of Hastings to Dupré, of January 6. 1773. When Hastings writes to the young Nabob, he calls the Munny Begum "the rightful head of his family," and adds, that "she stands in the place of his deceased father." It is plain from thence, however strange, that the Nabob's own mother was held as an inferior.

tinuing all further yearly payments to Shah Alum. Breach of faith on this account became, at a later period, one of the charges brought against him. Yet, surely, there were some strong grounds both of justice and of policy in favour of the course which he pursued. We had wished to support the Emperor while he remained independent, or dependent only on ourselves; we might cease to support him whenever he resigned himself to our inveterate foes, and was preparing to turn our own gifts into arms against us.

The districts of Corah and Allabahad were promptly occupied by English troops. As our territory, however, stood at that time there was little or no temptation to annex them. It was computed that the expenses of maintaining them at so great a distance would exceed the utmost revenue they could bring. It was therefore the wish of Hastings to yield them for a stipulated sum to the adjacent State of Oude. He repaired to the city of Benares to confer in person with the Nabob Visier. There, in September, 1773, a treaty was agreed upon between them; the Nabob Visier undertaking to pay for the two districts the sum of fifty Lacs of Rupees.

But—alas for the fair fame not only of Hastings, but of England!—another and a weightier question was then decided at Benares. The Rohillas, a tribe of Afghan blood, had earlier in that century, and as allies of the Mogul, descended into the plains of Hindostan. They had obtained for their

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reward that fertile country which lies between the Ganges and the mountains on the western boundary of Oude. That country bore from them the name of Rohilcund. It had been earned by their services, and it was flourishing under their dominion. Of late there had sprung up a difference between them and their neighbours of Oude, with respect to some pecuniary stipulations which the Rohillas contracted and were backward to discharge. On that ground, Sujah Dowlah had a plea for war against them — a plea certainly plausible, and perhaps just. His real aim, however, was not the settlement of their account, but rather the entire subjugation of their race. He had little hope that his rabble of the plains would stand firm against the hardier offspring of the northern mountaineers. Therefore he applied to the English Governor for the aid of English bayonets; and this request came before Hastings at a time when the Bengal treasury was weighed down with heavy debts, and when nevertheless the letters from the Court of Directors were calling on him in the most earnest terms for large remittances. The Indian prince wanted soldiers, and the English chief wanted money, and on this foundation was the bargain struck between them. It was agreed that a body of the Company's troops should be sent to aid the Nabob Visier in the conquest of the Rohilla country; that the whole expense of these troops while engaged upon that service should be borne by him; and that when the object was accomplished he should pay

to the English a farther sum of forty Lacs of Rupees.

Not many months elapsed before these stipulations were fulfilled. In April, 1774, an English brigade under Colonel Champion invaded the Rohilla districts; and in a hard-fought battle gained a decisive victory over the Rohilla troops. Exactly half a century afterwards an English Bishop, on his first Visitation progress, found the whole scene still fresh in the traditions of the country. It was described to him how Hafiz, the Rohilla chief, an aged warrior, with a long grey beard, remained at last almost alone on a rising ground, in the heat of the fire, conspicuous by his splendid dress and stately horse, waving his hand, and vainly endeavouring to bring back his army to another charge; till, seeing that all was lost, he waved his hand once more, gave a shout, and galloped forwards to die, shot through and through, upon the English bayonets. The Nabob Visier applied for the body of Hafiz, that it might be cut in pieces and his grey head be carried on a pike about the country. But the English Colonel, with a nobler spirit, caused it to be wrapped in shawls and sent with due honour to his kinsmen. The other Afghan chiefs submitted, excepting only one, Fyzoola Khan, who continued his resistance, and was enabled at length to obtain some terms of peace from the Visier. Throughout this conflict, nothing could be more dastardly than the demeanour of the troops of Oude. They had slunk to the rear

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of the armies; they had kept aloof from the fight; and it was only after the battle was decided, that they came forward to plunder the camp, and despoil the dead and dying. Many an indignant murmur was heard from the British ranks: "We "have the honour of the day, and these banditti, "these robbers, are to have the profit!" * Nor was this all. The Visier and his soldiery next applied themselves to wreak their fury on the vanquished, and to lay waste with sword and fire the rich plains of Rohilcund. No terms whatever had been made by Hastings for the more humane and merciful conduct of the war; and Colonel Champion, in his private letters to the Governor, might well avow his fear that, although we stood free from all participation in these cruel deeds, the mere fact of our having been silent spectators of them, would tend, in the minds of the whole Indian people, to the dishonour of the English name.

The case of Hastings as to the Rohillas—a case at the best a bad one—was farther injured by the indiscretion of his friends. Some of them afterwards pleaded for him in the House of Commons, that the Rohillas were not among the native possessors of the soil in India, but only an invading tribe of foreign lineage and of recent conquest. With just indignation, Mr. Wilberforce exclaimed, "Why, what are we but the Rohillas of Bengal?"†

* Letter from Colonel Champion to Warren Hastings, April 24. 1774.

† Speech in the House of Commons, June 2. 1786.

But Hastings himself took better ground. Besides the pecuniary advantages, on which no question could exist, he had political arguments to urge in vindication of his treaty. It was of paramount importance to us to form a close alliance with Oude; and, on forming an alliance with that State, we had a full right to espouse its quarrels; nor could its frontier be made compact and defensible without the expulsion of the Rohillas, who, after all, even in their own districts, formed but a small minority of the entire population, and whose cause was in no degree supported by their Hindoo subjects. Statements of this kind, certainly specious, and even in some part true, but as certainly, I think, inadequate for vindication, had much weight at a later period with many able and upright men—as for example with Lord Grenville. But they did not even for a moment mislead the Prime Minister at the time of the transaction. "As soon"—thus, in 1786, spoke Lord North in the House of Commons—"as soon as I was apprised of the "facts of the Rohilla war, I thought the conduct "of Mr. Hastings highly censurable; and I sent "to the Court of Directors, urging them to com-"bine with me for his recall." *

It was at the close of the Rohilla war, in October

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxvi. p. 45. In the same debate (p. 54.) Mr. W. W. Grenville "was ready to avow his opinion that he "thought the war was perfectly just as well as politic." For the true state of Rohilcund in 1774, see a note by Professor Wilson upon Mill. (Hist. vol. iii. p. 575.)

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1774, that there anchored in the Ganges the ship which brought from England the expected Members of the Council and the Judges of the Supreme Court. Of the three new Councillors, Francis was by far the youngest; but his more shining and ardent spirit gave him a great ascendancy over Clavering's and Monson's. He came — there is little risk in affirming — determined to find fault; ready, whatever might befal, to cavil and oppose. The very first despatch which he and his two colleagues addressed to the Directors, is filled with complaints that sufficient respect had not been paid them; that no guard of honour had met them on the beach; that the batteries of Fort William, in their salute, instead of twenty-one guns as they expected, had fired only seventeen. The same punctilious and resentful temper attended them in their deliberations. Of the five who met in Council, the old servants of the Company Hastings and Barwell stood together; on the other side were arrayed, as though in military order, the General, the Colonel, and the late War-Office Clerk. Thus they formed a majority upon every question that arose; thus, from the very first they wrested the whole power of the Government and all substantial patronage from the hands of Hastings.

So eager were these gentlemen to taste the sweets of power, that Hastings found some difficulty in prevailing upon them to pause even for a single day. With scarce time to read the Minutes, with none at all to inquire or reflect, they began to

act. They ordered the English brigade to march back from Rohilcund, whatever might be then the condition of that province. They recalled, with every token of disgrace, Mr. Middleton, the confidential friend of Hastings, and by him appointed the Resident in Oude. They insisted, that even the most private of Mr. Middleton's letters should be laid before them. On these points Hastings, as he was bound, was not slow in appealing to Lord North. He observes most justly, that the new Councillors, even though they might condemn the whole policy and direction of the Rohilla War, ought rather, if they desired to establish future harmony, and to maintain the credit of the government free from inconsistency, to have afforded to their Governor-General the means of receding, without fixing a mark of reprobation on his past conduct, and without wounding his personal consequence at the Court of Oude. And Hastings adds: "Had they acted on such conciliatory prin-"ciples, I should, if I know my own heart, have "cheerfully joined in whatever system they might "afterwards think fit to adopt; not pretending in "such a case to set my judgment against the will "of the majority; but it was not to be expected "that I should subscribe implicitly to a direct cen-"sure of myself." *

In his more familiar letters, the Governor-General thus in strong colours paints the scene: "General Clavering is, I verily believe, a man of

* Letter to Lord North, December 4. 1774.

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"strict honour, but he brought strong prejudices "with him. . . . . Colonel Monson is a sensible "man, but received his first impressions from Major "Grant. . . . As for Francis, I shall say nothing "of him." A few months later, when the animosities had darkened, Hastings writes: "The "General rummages the Consultations for dispu- "table matter with old Fowke. Colonel Monson "receives, and I have been assured, descends even "to solicit, accusations. Francis writes." *

Confident in their absolute majority, the three new Councillors pursued their course of rashness, or, as Hastings terms it, frenzy. On the decease of Sujah Dowlah, and the succession of his son Asaph-ul-Dowlah as Nabob Visier, they passed a preposterous vote that the treaties which had been signed with the former should be considered as personal and as having ended with his life. They unsettled for a time the whole administration, both financial and judicial, of Bengal. Still more mischievous was their meddling in the case of Bombay, then first under the recent Act reduced to a subordinate Presidency. They rebuked its Council, and they reversed its policy; and, in utter ignorance of its affairs, took new measures for entangling it in the differences of the several Mahratta chiefs. Meanwhile their power seemed so unquestionable, and their hostility to Hastings so clear, that many

* Letters to Mr. Palk and to Colonel Maclean of December, 1774, and March 25. 1775. Memoirs of Hastings, by Gleig, vol. i. p. 477. and 516.

of his personal enemies began to brood over projects of revenge as certain of attainment. Two Englishmen of the name of Fowke came forward to charge him with corruption. The Ranee, or Princess, of Burdwan, with her adopted son, sent in a similar complaint. But foremost of all in rancour as in rank was Nuncomar. He put into the hands of Francis a paper containing several heavy accusations against Hastings; above all, that he had taken a bribe for dismissing without punishment Mahomed Reza Khan; and this paper was produced by Francis at the Council-Board.

Long and fierce were the discussions that ensued. The Governor-General did not shrink from the investigation of his conduct, but he insisted, and surely with perfect right, that the Members of the Council should form themselves into a Committee for that purpose, and after receiving whatever evidence they pleased, transmit it for adjudication either to the Supreme Court of Justice at Calcutta, or to the Directors at home. On the other hand the majority maintained, that even while sitting as a Council they might proceed to the trial of their chief. They desired in consequence, that Nuncomar should be called in to confront the Governor-General. "Before the question is put," says Hastings in his Minute, "I declare that I will not "suffer Nuncomar to appear before the Board as my "accuser. I know what belongs to the dignity and "character of the first member of this administra-"tion. I will not sit at this Board in the character

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"of a criminal. Nor do I acknowledge the mem-"bers of this Board to be my judges." But the majority still persevering, the Governor-General rose, declared the meeting dissolved, and left the room with Barwell in his train. The remaining members voted that the meeting was not dissolved, named Clavering as chairman, and called in Nuncomar. He came, and according to the custom of all false accusers, spoke much upon his own integrity, and the absence of every motive save a sense of right for the charge which he had made. And he ended by producing a new letter on which to found another charge. This letter purported to come from the Munny Begum, expressing the gratitude she felt to the Governor-General for her appointment, and adding, that as a token of her gratitude she had presented him with two Lacs of Rupees. "This letter," wrote Hastings, "is a "gross forgery, and I make no doubt of proving "it." *

In this state of the transactions, Hastings thought himself entitled to allege, that Nuncomar, Mr. Fowke, and some others were guilty of a conspiracy against him. On this ground he began legal proceedings against them in the Supreme Court. The Judges after a long examination of the case directed Nuncomar and Fowke to give bail, and bound over the Governor-General to prosecute them.

Of a sudden, however, and only a few weeks afterwards, a more serious blow was aimed at Nun-

* To Colonel Maclean, March 25. 1775.

comar by another hand. He was arrested at the suit of a native merchant named Mohun Persaud, and, like any other man accused of felony, was thrown into the common gaol. The charge against him was that he had forged a bond five years before. On that charge, the Supreme Court not then existing, he had been brought to trial before the Mayor's Court of Calcutta, but was released through the authority which at that time Hastings exerted in his favour. The suit had, therefore, been suspended, but not concluded. It was now revived before a higher and more independent tribunal, established expressly with a view to such cases; and it was revived at the very earliest lawful time after the necessary documents had been transferred to the new Court. So opportune was this prosecution for the interests of the Governor-General, and so suspicious the coincidence of time, that Hastings has ever since been suspected and arraigned as the real mover in the business. Yet, besides the presumption on his side to be drawn from the regular conduct of the suit, there is surely some weight in a fact which many writers have passed over—that in the proceedings before the Supreme Court, Hastings solemnly deposed, upon his oath, that he had never directly or indirectly countenanced or forwarded the prosecution for forgery against Nuncomar.*

* See the Memoirs of Sir Elijah Impey, by his Son, p. 83. ed. 1846. In that work, and in a note upon Mill, by Professor

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The new Members of the Council showed the utmost resentment at the prosecution, but found themselves wholly powerless to stem it. Their fierce representations to the Judges proved in vain. They could only send complimentary messages to Nuncomar in his prison, and grant additional favours to his son. The trial came on, in due time, before a Jury composed of Englishmen, when the charge of forgery was established to their entire satisfaction, and a verdict of Guilty was returned. One of the Judges, Sir Robert Chambers, the friend of Dr. Johnson, had proposed to try the prisoner on an earlier and a milder statute, inflicting no capital penalty; but Chambers is stated to have been convinced by, and most certainly he acquiesced in, the arguments against it. The sentence of death on Nuncomar was pronounced by Sir Elijah Impey as the chief, and apparently with the full concurrence of his colleagues. According to the Letters Patent by which the Supreme Court was constituted, the Judges had power to grant a reprieve from execution, provided they gave their reasons, and until the King's pleasure could be known. That power of reprieve, however, they did not see cause to exert on this occasion. Thus the law was left to take its course. On the 5th of August, 1775, the Rajah Nuncomar, at that time seventy years of age, and the head of the Brahmins of Bengal, was led

Wilson (vol. iii. p. 644.), the argument as to the regular renewal of the suit at the earliest opportunity, will be found more fully and particularly stated.

forth to the gallows, and hanged; while Clavering and his two friends, with impotent rage, shut themselves up within their houses, and while an immense concourse of Hindoos looked on in wonder and affright.

For his share in these proceedings the Chief Justice has been arraigned even more severely than the Governor-General. It was Hastings — thus cries Burke in his ardent and sometimes overflowing zeal—it was Hastings who murdered Nuncomar by the hand of Sir Elijah Impey! The personal friendship which had subsisted between them since their schoolboy days was urged as strong presumption of a guilty compact. For this argument, as levelled at one of the Judges, it became convenient to overlook entirely the existence of the other three. Thus Impey, who had but acted jointly, was arraigned alone. At length the surmises and suspicions against him assumed a more definite form. At the close of 1787 a member of the House of Commons, Sir Gilbert Elliot, moved for his impeachment mainly on this ground. Then Sir Elijah was permitted to appear at the Bar, and to speak in his own defence. He showed, to the perfect satisfaction of by far the greater part of those who heard him, that his behaviour through the trial had been wholly free from blame. And as to the proposal of Sir Robert Chambers, — "it "was a proposal," said he, "I speak positively "for myself, that I should, and I believe the other "Judges would, have been glad to have concurred

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"in. . . . . But that both the Statutes could stand "together, and that it was optional in the Court "to choose the Statute which it liked best, I "thought impossible on clear principles of Law."

But this was not all. Why, asked Sir Elijah, on behalf of his colleagues and himself, why were they to be censured for not having stayed the execution? By the Letters Patent they were required to give their reasons for any respite. What reasons, then, could they have given in the case of Nuncomar? Were they to allege his high rank, his long experience, or his priestly character? These, if rightly viewed, were only aggravations of his crime. Or were they to state that his crime, as any other act of forgery or perjury, was, in the eyes of the people of Bengal, a common and a slight offence? * It might be answered, that for that very reason it was needful to make a solemn and severe example. Yet now, when dispassionately viewed, these arguments against a respite seem more specious than solid, or at least are overborne by still weightier considerations. It is a most essential principle, whenever the penalty of death is to be inflicted, that the popular feeling should keep pace with the established law, lest, instead of horror at the crime, we produce only compassion for the criminal. In the age of Impey, however, this great principle was, even in England, by no

* Even half a century later we find in the Indian Journal of Bishop Heber, "Perjury is dreadfully common, and very little "thought of." (Furreedpoor, July 26. 1824.)

means fully acknowledged or acted upon, and by that principle, therefore, Impey must not be too rigorously tried. On the whole, so far as the denial of a respite is concerned, we may think that his decision was erroneous, but have no grounds whatever for asserting that his motive was corrupt.*

The execution of Nuncomar, although it may not have been connected with any step of Hastings, was certainly auspicious to his interests. The Hindoos could make no nice distinctions, such as the case required, between political and judicial authority. They looked only to the one broad fact that one of their chief men had stood forth to accuse the Governor-General, and that within a few weeks of his accusation that chief man had died upon the gallows. From that moment all the other natives shrank from any further charges against Hastings. From that moment, in their

* A very interesting account of the demeanour and the death of Nuncomar, and of its effects upon the Hindoo population, was produced by Sir Gilbert Elliot in 1788, and printed in the Annual Register for that year (p. 177). It was said to be written by Mr. Macrabie, who was the Sheriff present at the execution, and it has been followed by nearly all the later writers. But Mr. Impey, in the Memoirs of his father (see p. 111., and also p. 285.), gives some strong grounds for questioning its authenticity. It was not heard of until after more than twelve years, when it was produced for a merely party purpose, by the far from scrupulous hands of Philip Francis, the brother-in-law of Macrabie; and some of the particulars it states are "directly contradicted by contemporary accounts upon legal "evidence."

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eyes, he recovered a large portion of his power. But it should be added, in justice to his memory, that throughout his long administration, he attracted, in a high degree, their love as well as fear. The English in India also were nearly all upon his side. Hastings, they saw, was familiar with their wants and wishes, and profoundly versed in their affairs. On the other hand they had slight confidence in either Clavering or Monson ; and they had quickly taken fire against the War Office Clerk, who, in all respects ignorant of India, was yet seeking to impose upon it, with peremptory violence, every crotchet of his brain. He had not been many weeks at Calcutta ere he obtained the common surname of "King Francis," or "Francis the "First."

The arrogance of Francis, both then and afterwards, was indeed almost boundless. It is only, as I conceive, his consciousness of the authorship of Junius that can in any degree explain, though not excuse it. How else does it seem possible that fifteen years later, when that great man, Edmund Burke, was in the zenith of his fame, he should be addressed as follows, in a private letter from Philip Francis?—"Once for all, I wish you would let me "teach you to write English." And then follows, in the same letter, a striking sentence, not inferior perhaps to any in Junius; it most felicitously applies to writings the same principle acknowledged to be true of wood and stone:—"Why will you

" not allow yourself to be persuaded that polish is " material to preservation?" *

Another point in the character of Francis — well according with what we may presume of the author of the reply to Junia † — was his taste for profligate amours. It was from these, at a somewhat later period, that arose the personal and bitter estrangement between himself and Sir Elijah Impey. By means of a ladder of ropes, Francis had one night climbed into the chamber of Mrs. Grand, a lady of Scottish birth, the wife of a Calcutta Barrister. After he had remained there for three-quarters of an hour an alarm was given, and Francis descending in haste from the apartment of the lady was seized at the foot of the ladder by the servants of the husband. Hereupon an action was brought by Mr. Grand against Mr. Francis in the Supreme Court of Calcutta. It was usual for the Judges of that Court to assess the damages in civil actions without the intervention of a Jury. Sir Elijah Impey in this case fixed the sum to be awarded at fifty thousand rupees. Yet, in the opinion of his colleague, Sir Robert Chambers, and still more strongly, no doubt, in the opinion of Francis him-

* Letter of November 3. 1750, as printed in Burke's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 164.

† Of that letter Junius immediately afterwards became ashamed; and he desired Mr. Woodfall to throw doubts on its authenticity. (Note of Sept. 10. 1769.) It is omitted from the earlier editions, but will be found in the publication of 1812. (Vol. iii. p. 218.)

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self, a lesser sum would have sufficed; since, however suspicious the ladder of ropes and the nocturnal visit, no positive act of guilt was proved. Up to that time the Chief Justice and the Member of Council at Calcutta had been on civil, nay familiar terms, but from this transaction may be dated the commencement of the active and persevering animosity with which Francis ever afterwards continued to pursue Sir Elijah Impey. Mr. Grand succeeded in obtaining a divorce, and Mrs. Grand took refuge with Francis, by whom, however, she was soon afterwards forsaken. She returned to Europe as the companion of another gentleman, Mr. William Macintosh; and, by a far more surprising turn of Fortune, closed her adventurous career as the wife of a celebrated foreign statesman, Prince Talleyrand.*

The news of the divisions in the Council at Calcutta appears to have greatly perplexed the Directors at home. For some time they endeavoured, but with little good effect, to hold a middle course. We find, in November, 1775, the King write as follows to Lord North: "The East India Directors

* Memoirs of Sir Elijah Impey, by his son, p. 173., and the unpublished biography of Mr. Charles Macintosh, as quoted in the Quarterly Review, No. CLXVII. p. 70. Perhaps it may be thought that Sir Robert Chambers, in his view of this transaction, judged rather according to the Mahomedan law, which in every such case requires the testimony of four eye-witnesses. See the Moslem Annals of Abulfeda (p. 71.), and the Decline and Fall of Gibbon, who calls this "a law of domestic peace." (Vol. ix. p. 326.)

"in their despatch manifestly wish to hurt neither "Hastings nor his adversaries, and therefore will "most probably disoblige both." Lord North himself, however, was deeply impressed with the iniquity of the Rohilla war. He regretted, that under the Regulating Act there was no power during the first five years to recall the Governor-General without an Address to that effect from the Company to the Crown. "Send us that Address"—such was his advice to his friends in the Direction; and accordingly after the annual elections in the spring of 1776, a strong effort was made. In the Court of Directors the numbers were nearly even; there were eleven votes for the recall of Hastings, and ten against it. The minority appealed to a Court of Proprietors, where the struggle was renewed. On that occasion the agent of Hastings in London, Colonel Maclean, reckoned up in some dismay the hostile force which not only "the Chairs" but the Government poured in. He saw mingling with the merchants and the City-men no less than forty-nine Peers, Privy Councillors, and men in office; at their head a Minister of the Crown, Lord Sandwich. The debate continued till near midnight. A motion for adjournment was made, and the opponents of Hastings prevailed in that division; but a Ballot on the main question being demanded for another day, the motion for his recall was negatived by a majority of upwards of one hundred.

Lord North was greatly incensed at this defeat. He let fall some angry expressions; or, at least,

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some such were ascribed to him by the zeal of partisans. The two Houses should be called together before Christmas; there should be another India Bill; the Calcutta government must be new modelled; the Company must be restricted to its trade. These vague threats wrought too far upon Colonel Maclean. He believed his patron in risk of a Parliamentary dismissal, or, perhaps, a Parliamentary censure. He was scared instead of being re-assured by the dangers which he had surmounted; and thought only how to shrink from the dangers to come. He had in his possession a private letter, written by Hastings a year and a half before, in which Hastings announced his resolution of resigning if he should not find his measures supported and approved. In another letter, two months afterwards, Hastings had most clearly revoked that resolution.* Nevertheless, Colonel Maclean in October, 1776, thought himself sufficiently empowered to tender to the Court of Directors the resignation of the Governor General. The Directors, eager to be relieved from their embarrassment, made little difficulty. They accepted the resignation, and, with the connivance of the Crown, named one of their

* The two letters of Hastings, addressed to Colonel Maclean and another agent, and dated March 27. and May 18. 1775, are published at full length by Mr. Gleig in Hastings's Memoirs. The terms of the second letter are quite explicit. "I now "retract the resolution communicated to you separately in my "letters of the 27th of March." Compare with these documents the Article of Charge (No. ix.), by Mr. Burke.

own body, Mr. Edward Wheler, to the vacant place in the Council of Bengal.

But meanwhile the state of that Council had wholly changed. In September, 1776, Colonel Monson had died. By his decease, and by the means of his own casting vote, the full powers of Government fell back into the hands of the Governor-General. With his usual fixedness of purpose he now resumed his former policy and reappointed his old friends. Above all, after a short delay, "Nat Middleton" (for so he fondly calls him), became once more the Resident in Oude. "The "first act of my authority," said Hastings, "might "justly be for the retrieval of the first wound "which was given to it." Since his Five Years' Settlement of the land-revenue was now drawing to a close, he gave orders for another valuation, to be conducted solely under his own control. In spite of the strenuous opposition of Clavering and Francis, he created a new office for that object. At the same time his mind was brooding over a vast scheme for the complete ascendancy in India of the English name — a system of subsidiary alliance with native princes, and, above all, with the Nabob of Oude and the Nizam, — a system which it was left to his successors to unfold and to pursue. In all these contemplations of coming empire it is remarkable how deep and far-sighted were his views. Thus, at a time when scarce any other statesman bestowed a thought or care upon the martial race that dwelt along the banks of the Five Rivers, we

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find Hastings clearly discern and dread their increasing greatness. We find him in one of his Minutes refer with some anxiety to "the nation or "religious sect of the Seiks," and desire some occasion "of blasting the growth of a generation "whose strength might become fatal to our own." *

Such were the schemes that Hastings was maturing, when, in June, 1777, a packet-ship from England anchored in the Hooghly, and all Calcutta was startled with the news that the Governor-General had resigned; that his resignation was accepted; and that the government was transferred to other hands. No man was more astonished at these tidings than the Governor-General himself. He declared that Colonel Maclean had far, very far, exceeded his instructions. But he afterwards said, that nevertheless he should have felt himself bound by the acts of his agent, had not General Clavering attempted to seize the government by force. Clavering never asked whether the offer of resignation was acknowledged as authentic. He never asked whether—as was in fact the case, and as had been expressly stipulated with the Directors and with Lord North — the precise time for the resignation was to be left to the choice of Hastings. Without question or parley, he, in his own name, summoned a Council, to which Francis came, and at which Clavering took the usual oath as Governor-General. As such also he sent his Persian interpreter

* Minute, December 4. 1784. See Burke's Articles of Charge, No. xviii. sec. 24.

to Hastings with a letter, requiring him to deliver the keys of the fort and treasury. Meanwhile, in another chamber, Hastings took the chair with Barwell by his side, and declared himself determined to maintain his just authority until further orders should arrive. Then it was that the attachment of his countrymen stood Hastings in good stead. Had there been, as was feared, an appeal to arms, there seems little question that all, or nearly all, would have ranged themselves upon his side. Seeing this, the opposite party agreed, though unwillingly, to his proposal; that they should ask, and should abide by, the opinion of the Judges of the Supreme Court. This was no season for delay; the case being thus referred to the Judges, they met the same evening, and continued all night in anxious deliberation. At four the next morning Sir Elijah reported their unanimous judgment, that the resignation of Hastings was invalid, and the assumption of power by Clavering illegal. Thus was the Governor-General enabled to maintain his ground. On this occasion he justly felt that his all had been at stake. Writing at the time he says: "If I am gone, and Clavering in possession, they may prove what they "will against me, even rape and murder." And a few years later we find him mention Impey as "a man to whose support I was at one time indebted for the safety of my fortune, honour, "and reputation." *

* Memoirs by Gleig, vol. ii. p. 255. Mr. Gleig does not

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But Hastings was not content with his success on this occasion. He endeavoured to pursue it with a degree of violence and indiscretion scarcely less than his rival had displayed. He prevailed on Barwell to concur in a Resolution that General Clavering, by attempting to usurp the functions of Governor-General, had surrendered and resigned both his place in Council and his office as Commander in Chief of the Indian forces. Against this flagrant abuse of victory Clavering and Francis remonstrated in vain. Now, in their turn, they appealed to the Judges of the Supreme Court. Sir Elijah Impey, in the name of his brethren, pronounced it as their unanimous decision, that the Council had no legal power to remove one of its members or declare his seat vacant. This salutary mediation between two vehement adverse parties — these alternate checks to the excesses of each — seem to me to do honour to Sir Elijah's impartial sense of justice, and serve to disprove the charge brought against his conduct at this juncture, as though, for some corrupt purpose of his own, he had been a mere instrument and puppet in the hands of Hastings.

In this struggle the temper of Clavering — a frank, plain soldier — had been grievously chafed. Only a few weeks afterwards, in August, 1777, he

give the exact date of this last letter, but from the context it appears to have been written early in the year 1780. I can by no means agree with those who conceive that it alludes to the case of Nuncomar.

sickened and died. At a later period his friend Mr. Francis thus portrays his character: "He "was a strict, rigid man; not, as some thought, "cruel, but rigid, even to prudery, as I have "sometimes told him, when I have seen him re- "fuse little offerings of fruit and flowers, that cer- "tainly did not come within the legal prohibition "of presents." *

It is said, that the last appearance in public of the dying man was, after much solicitation, as a guest at his rival's wedding-feast. Not many days before General Clavering expired, Warren Hastings married Marian Imhoff.* The first husband of this lady was a German by birth, a Baron by title, a miniature painter by profession. Hastings had first met them eight years before, on embarking in England for Madras, when he found them passengers with him on board the "Duke of Graf- "ton." The Baroness was in a high degree graceful and engaging; the Baron, at least in equal measure, needy and intent on gain. Between the fair Marian and Hastings an attachment soon arose; an attachment which, like all his feelings, whether of love or hate, was calm, but deep-rooted, and most stedfast; an attachment which appears to have continued without cloud or change

* Speech in the House of Commons, Feb. 26. 1788.

† "A native, we have somewhere read, of Archangel," says Mr. Macaulay of this lady. (Essays, vol. iii. p. 339.) The precise authority for that statement appears to be the contemporary translator of the Seir Mutakhereen. (Vol. ii. p. 476. note.)

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for well nigh fifty years. A kind of Council was held between the lady, her husband and her lover. It was agreed that advantage should be taken of the looseness of the marriage-tie in Northern Germany; that the Baroness, with the Baron's full consent, should commence a suit for a divorce in the law-courts of Franconia; that meanwhile they should continue to dwell together; and that, on obtaining the desired release, Hastings should make the Baroness his wife, adopting for his own her two children by the Baron. It may well be supposed, that in this negotiation the pecuniary interests of Imhoff himself were not forgotten. Some years elapsed before the requisite formalities could be gone through in the Franconian Courts; but at length, in the summer of 1777, the sentence of divorce reached India; the Baroness became Mrs. Hastings, and the Baron returned to Europe with wealth far greater than his skill in portrait painting could have gained.*

These transactions, which may be considered as belonging only to private life, were at a later period drawn into the public scene. When Hastings himself returned to Europe, when his conduct had become the mark for Parliamentary speeches and

* It appears from the letters of Goethe to Madame de Stein, as first published in 1848, that Imhoff, on his return to Europe, married one of Madame de Stein's sisters, and was often seen in the Weimar circles. When he died, in 1788, Goethe, who had discerned his character, goes so far as to say: *Deine Schwester wird auch einsehen lernen, dass er zu ihrem glück gestorben sei.* (See vol. iii. p. 308.)

Parliamentary impeachments, his enemies were never weary of descanting on the dangerous fascinations of his wife. She was accused of receiving presents in India: she was accused of making presents in England. Her favourable reception at St. James's increased the Opposition rage. Through her it was endeavoured to aim an insidious blow against the consort of the Sovereign. What other ground, it was malignantly asked, except some sordid interest, some share in the plundered "wealth of Ormus and of Ind," could propitiate towards the relict of Mr. Imhoff the most pure and spotless of Queens? All the satirical poems of that period teem with such attacks.*

In the council-chamber of Bengal the decease of General Clavering was nearly balanced by the arrival of Mr. Wheler. The new member took part, in most cases, against the Governor-General with Francis. But, besides that he showed himself a far less acrimonious opponent, the power of the casting-vote still left on every question the practical ascendancy in the hands of Hastings.

From the supreme government of India let us pass to the subordinate-Council of Madras. There, though on a smaller scale, dissension had grown to

* Thus in the Political Eclogues:

"O'er Mornington French prattle holds command;
"Hastings buys German phlegm at second-hand."

And in the Rolliad we are invited to a description of "the "ivory bed which was lately presented to Her Majesty by "Mrs. Hastings."

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a still more formidable height. Some years since a war had been waged against the petty kingdom of Tanjore. The Rajah, one of the Mahratta princes, had been taken prisoner and deposed. The territory had been seized and transferred to the Nabob of Arcot. At home the Directors, after no small amount of wavering, had disapproved these measures. They despatched peremptory orders to restore, without loss of time, the Rajah to his throne. Moreover, they sent out to the chief place at Madras a personal friend of the Rajah, the former Governor, Pigot, who had recently been raised to an Irish peerage. Thus from the first moment of his landing again on Indian ground, Lord Pigot found himself in direct opposition to the leading members of his Council. He did, however, proceed to Tanjore and reinstate the Rajah. But on his return he saw a formidable combination leagued against him; at its head Mahomed Ali, the Nabob of Arcot.

Mahomed Ali, the old ally of the English, and maintained in his dominion by their means, had not, as was expected, fixed his residence in any of his own palaces or cities. Abandoning all appearance of state, he dwelt in a common country-house, near the suburbs of Madras. There he was ever intriguing and caballing with several of the Company's servants. They would supply him with money at any sudden call, and well knew how to make such loans most highly advantageous to themselves. Foremost among these usurers stood

Mr. Paul Benfield, a man to whom Burke's eloquence has given immortal fame,—if fame indeed it should be called! For, as the misdeeds of Verres will live for ever in the glowing denunciations of Cicero, so has the genius of Burke poured its imperishable lustre over the whole tortuous track of the Madras money-lenders, and rescued from oblivion the "Debts of the Nabob of Arcot." *

Paul Benfield was of humble birth and of no patrimony. He had filled a small place in the Company's service at a salary of a few hundred pounds a year, and was chiefly conspicuous for keeping the finest carriages and horses at Madras. His ostentatious habits of expense did not seem consistent with any large accumulation of wealth. To the public surprise he now brought forward a claim on the Nabob, for money lent to the amount of 162,000*l.*, besides another claim on individuals in Tanjore to the amount of 72,000*l.* For the whole of this enormous sum he held assignments on the revenues and standing crops in Tanjore; and he pleaded that his interest ought not to be affected by the reinstatement of the Rajah. The Nabob, when consulted on the matter, at once admitted and confirmed the claim. In this case Lord Pigot might well suspect collusion. He might also reasonably question the right of the Nabob to make any such assignments in Tanjore. The majority of his Council, however, were inclined to favour these demands, and there ensued a long train

* See his great speech of Feb. 28. 1785.

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of angry altercations. At length the issue was taken on a side-point of small importance—the desire of Lord Pigot to appoint Mr. Russel, one of his own friends, as Resident at Tanjore. Finding himself out-voted, Lord Pigot first set the dangerous example—so soon to recoil upon himself—of overstepping the bounds of law. He assumed that the Governor was an integral part of the Council; that he was not bound by the majority against him, and might refuse to carry out any decision in which he had not concurred. The opposite doctrine was maintained, no less vehemently, by the other members. Upon this an arbitrary order from Lord Pigot declared them suspended from their functions; and they, in return, concerted measures for his arrest. The commander of the forces, Sir Robert Fletcher (the same who, in Bengal, had been cashiered), was at that time ill; but the second in command, Colonel Stuart, was upon their side. On the 24th of August, 1776, the Colonel passed the greater part of the day, in company or in business, with Lord Pigot; he both breakfasted and dined with him as his familiar friend, and was driving in the carriage with him when, according to the Colonel's previous orders, the carriage was surrounded and stopped by troops. His Lordship was then informed that he was their prisoner. As such he was forthwith conveyed to St. Thomas's Mount. There he was left in an officer's house, with a battalion of artillery to guard him, while all the powers of Government

were assumed and administered by his opponents in the Council.

This violent act of the Council of Madras against their Governor, produced, at a later period, a keen discussion in the House of Commons. Admiral Pigot declared, on that occasion, that his brother had been offered a bribe amounting to 600,000*l.* in English money, only to defer, and that for a short and specified time, the reinstatement of the Rajah of Tanjore. On the other hand, Mr. Stratton, one of the members of the Council who had ordered the Governor's arrest, said it was a fact well known, that Lord Pigot might have had his liberty again in three days, had he chosen to accept it.*

In the Courts of Directors and Proprietors there appeared upon this subject the usual fluctuation. There was, however, a better reason for it, in a case where beyond all doubt neither party had been free from blame. At length it was agreed that the members of the Council who had concurred in this arrest should be recalled; and on their return they became liable, under Resolutions of the House of Commons, to a trial and a fine. At the same time a commission was prepared under the Company's seal, by which Lord Pigot was restored to his office; but he was directed within one week to give up the Government to his successor, and embark for England. By these means it was intended to avoid a triumph, or the appearance of a triumph, to either side. But long before these orders could

* Debate in the House of Commons, April 16. 1779.

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be received in India, Lord Pigot was beyond the reach of any human sentence. After eight months of confinement he died at St. Thomas's Mount.

Early in 1778 the government of Madras was assumed by Sir Thomas Rumbold. He might avoid dissensions with his Council, but on other grounds he incurred, and not unjustly, the censure of the Court of Directors. In less than three years we find him utterly dismissed from their service. He was accused of tyranny to the Chiefs of the Northern Circars, of injustice to the Nizam, of arrogance to Hyder Ali. Nor did even his personal character stand clear from all reproach. It was proved that, during his two years of government, he was enabled to remit to London more than three times the amount of his legal salary.* In the Session of 1782 a Bill of Pains and Penalties against him for breaches of public trust was brought in by Mr. Dundas; but ceased to attract attention, or to be actively pressed, amidst the Ministerial changes that ensued. Well might Mr. Fox observe, however: "If the Bill should be lost for want of "attendance, that would not clear the character "of Sir Thomas Rumbold."

* Second Report of the Committee of Secrecy, 1781. Sir Thomas alleged, in reply, that he had at the time property of his own in India; and this was proved by the evidence and accounts of his attorney, Mr. Price. But, on making full allowance for these, says Professor Wilson, "there still remains "a considerable sum to be accounted for, to explain the large "amount of his remittances to England." (Note to Mill's Hist. vol. iv. p. 151., and another, p. 172.)

CHAPTER LXIX.

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In the last two chapters we have traced the progress of our Eastern empire when not assailed, nor even threatened, by any European enemy. The scene is now about to change. That war which, commencing in North America, troubled not England only but also France and Spain, cast its baleful shadows to the Mexican seas on the one side, and to the shores of Coromandel on the other. Then it was that the experience, the energy, the high statesmanship of Hastings were signally displayed. Then it was, that the value of his services was felt even by his adversaries in Downing Street or Leadenhall. Lord North, to his honour, laid aside all party resentment. As he afterwards stated in the House of Commons, he knew the abilities of Mr. Hastings, and felt that this was not the time for any change in the government of India.* Thus, when the period of Five Years fixed by the Regulating Act had expired, the Governor-General was quietly and without a struggle re-appointed.

* Speech, June 1. 1786. Parl. Hist. vol. xxvi. p. 46.

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At the beginning of 1778, the tidings were already rife among the native races, that YENGHI DUNIA, or New World, as they called America, had broken loose from the country of the COOMPANY SAHIB.* Already might they hear the rising sounds of exultation from the rival settlements of Chandernagore and Pondicherry. But the first sign or symptom that reached Hastings of French cabals in India came from the Mahratta States. These had grown to greatness in the decline of the Mogul empire and risen on its ruins, but had since been weakened by dissensions of their own. Among themselves, as in the venerable monarchy from the ruins of which they had sprung, there was a wide line between the real and the rightful exercise of power. The lineal heir of Sivajee, the true Sovereign in name, had become a mere state-prisoner in the palace of Sattara. The actual authority was vested in a great magistrate, or chief of the Council, who was called the Peshwah, and who held court with regal state at Poonah. Through a strange anomaly that Ministerial office descended by hereditary right, and sometimes therefore devolved upon a minor. The Peshwah, besides his own or the Rajah of Sattara's dominions, always claimed, and occasionally exercised, a kind of feudal supremacy over the other Mahratta principalities that lay scattered in the wide expanse between the hill-forts of Mysore and the waters of the Ganges. First among them were the houses of Scindiah and

* Seer Mutakhareen, vol. iii. p. 332.

of Holkar; the Guicowar, who ruled in Guzerat; and the Bonslah, or Rajah of Berar, a scion of the line of Sivajee. All these Mahratta chiefs, in common with their subjects, held the Brahmin faith; in that respect, as in some others, forming a remarkable contrast to the race of the Mahometan conquerors beside them, as the Nizam and the Visier. The mean origin of the first Mahratta freebooters is denoted even in the hereditary titles of their princes; the Guicowar, for example, signifies only the cow-herd. It is denoted also by the simple and abstemious habits which they long preserved. A Mussulman historian, the contemporary of Warren Hastings, describes the most powerful Mahratta ruler of his time, as living only on the food of the poorest peasant — on black bread made of Badjrah, unripe mangoes, and raw red pepper. "Let the "reader," says the more refined Mahometan, "guess "the taste of the whole nation by this sample of its "chiefs. And although," he adds, "they have "come to command kingdoms and to rule over "empires, they are still the beggars they have been. "Go to any of them, from the lowest clerk to the "Minister of State, and the first words which you "shall hear from them are always these: — 'What "'have you brought for me? — Have you brought "'anything for me?' and should any man go "empty-handed to them, they would strip him "of his turban and coat, and then recommend him "devoutly to Almighty God!" *

* Seer Mutakhareen, vol. iii. p. 228. The word *Gai* or

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Between the chiefs at Poonah and the Presidency of Bombay there had been in former years some intricate negotiations and some desultory wars. The English had obtained possession of the island of Salsette, which, so lately as 1750, the Mahrattas had wrested from the Portuguese. They had also given shelter to a deposed and exiled Peshwah named Ragoba, or Ragonaut Row, who still carried on a cabal, and kept up a party, at home. Such was the posture of affairs when the Governor-General was startled by the tidings that a French ship had anchored in one of the Mahratta ports, and that a French agent had set out for Poonah. This Frenchman proved to be the Chevalier de St. Lubin, an adventurer who had formerly taken some part in the intrigues of the Presidency of Madras, and who had now obtained from his own government a clandestine commission to treat with the Mahrattas. It was reported to Hastings, that already they had agreed to his terms, and consented to yield to the French the port of Choul, on the coast of Malabar. "War is now inevitable," said Hastings to his Council; "let us then be the first "to strike a blow!" In this suggestion he was, as usual, supported by Barwell, and, as usual, opposed by Francis and Wheler, but, as usual also, his casting-vote prevailed. It was resolved, that a division of the Bengal army should be sent across

Gao, which lies at the root of *Guicowar*, when combined with *rus* (the Latin *ros*), forms the poetical name which the Hindoos give to milk; *gaorus*, or cow-dew.

the Jumna, and march through Bundelcund upon the Peshwah's country. Orders were sent to the Council of Bombay to enter into a concert of measures with Ragoba, and strive by all means to forward his pretensions. At the same time the Governor-General commenced an active negotiation, and sought to form a close alliance with another claimant to a principal place among the Mahratta chiefs — with Bonslah, the ruler of Berar.

It has been questioned, how far in these dealings with the Mahrattas, Hastings acted strictly in good faith. Certainly, at least, he is entitled to the praise, at a most difficult crisis, of energy and skill. The news of the disaster at Saratoga, far from damping his spirit, only animated his endeavours. "If it be "really true" — thus he spoke to his Council — "that the British arms and influence have suffered "so severe a check in the Western world, it is the "more incumbent on those who are charged with "the interests of Great Britain in the East to "exert themselves for the retrieval of the national "loss."* Only a few days after the Governor-General had thus spoken—only a few weeks after the British troops had marched—the further intelligence which the policy of Hastings had anticipated came. On the 7th of July, a letter from Mr. Baldwin, the Consul of England at Cairo, brought the news to Calcutta, that in the month of March preceding, war had been proclaimed both in London and in

* Declaration in Council, June 22. 1778. Burke's Articles of Charge, xx.

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Paris. Not an hour did Hastings lose. "On the "same day," he says, "we wrote to the Gover- "nor of Fort St. George, to prepare for the im- "mediate attack of Pondicherry; and we set them "an example on the 10th, by the capture of Chan- "dernagore." *

Pondicherry was invested by Sir Hector Munro, at the head of the Madras army. It yielded, after a brave resistance, and an engagement off the coast between the French and English squadrons. Then the French retained nothing in India but Mahé, a small fort and settlement on the coast of Malabar; and this also was reduced by the English from Madras, in the course of the ensuing spring. Meanwhile, in Bengal, the zeal of Hastings had directed the most active measures of defence. Several further batteries were raised along the river. Several armed cruizers were equipped. Stores for three months, both of ammunition and of victuals, were laid up in Fort William. Nine new battalions of Sepoys were enrolled. A demand for three battalions more was made upon the Rajah of Benares, and was agreed to, the Rajah being regarded as a feudatory prince, and required to contribute his share to the burthens of the war. The artillery was reinforced by recruits from the native Lascars; while the Europeans at Calcutta, to the number of one thousand, were enrolled as Militia in case of need. "Mr. Francis"—thus writes the Gover-

* To Laurence Sulivan, Esq., August 18. 1778. Memoirs by Gleig, vol. ii. p. 203.

nor-General to a private friend —"affects to regard "our means as insufficient, our resources as already "exhausted, a French invasion as impending, and "the country incapable of resistance. I am, for "my own part, confirmed in my opinion, that the "French, if they ever attempt the invasion of "Bengal, must make their way to it by an alliance "with one of the powers of the country; and the "only power with which that can be at present "effected is the Mahratta."

To his Mahratta expedition, therefore, the eyes of Hastings were anxiously turned. At first it was far from prospering. The commanding officer, Colonel Leslie, instead of pursuing his march after he had crossed the Jumna, loitered during four months, without the least necessity, in the plains of Bundelcund. His recall was unanimously voted in the Council-chamber at Calcutta, and was only anticipated by tidings of his death. His successor, Colonel Goddard, was an excellent and enterprising officer. He advanced at once into Berar. But further delays ensued in consequence of successive revolutions at the Court of Poonah. To await the effects of these, orders to halt were sent to Colonel Goddard from the Council of Bombay. Perhaps, however, their real object was to clutch the expected credit for themselves, since before the close of the year they sent forth an expedition of their own. That body of troops exceeded 4000 in number; it was accompanied by Ragoba; and the principal officer who served in it was Colonel Egerton. But

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by a most infelicitous arrangement, the superintendence and control of the expedition was vested by the Council in a travelling Committee; or, in other words field-deputies, according to the former precedents of Holland.

On climbing the Ghauts or passes and entering the Mahrattas' territory, Colonel Egerton was not joined, as Ragoba had encouraged him to hope, by any chief of importance, nor by any considerable number of adherents. On the contrary, he saw around him irregular troops of hostile cavalry, retiring as he advanced, but active and successful in cutting off his supplies. His own movements at this juncture were sufficiently deliberate; only eight miles in eleven days. In January, 1779, he had reached a point within sixteen miles of Poonah. There he found an army assembled to oppose him, and the Committee-men, losing courage, made up their minds to a retreat. A retreat was begun accordingly that night, and continued until the next afternoon, when, at a place called Wargaum, the English found themselves surrounded and hemmed in. One brave subaltern, Captain Hartley, offered to cut his way through, and to carry back the little army to Bombay, declaring that he could rely upon his men. His superior officers, on the other hand, deemed any such attempt chimerical, and determined to seek their safety in negotiation. The terms required for their unmolested passage were hard indeed, yet, hard though they were, could not be disputed unless by arms. It was agreed that

all the acquisitions gained by the English from the Mahrattas, since the peace of 1756, should be restored. It was further agreed, that the person of Ragoba should be given up, not indeed to the Poonah chiefs, but to Scindiah.

In mitigation of this last ignominious clause we may observe that, even previously, Ragoba, seeing the ill plight of the English army, and despairing of its safe return by force of arms, had declared his own intention of surrendering himself to Scindiah, as to a mediator and umpire rather than an enemy. Already for some days had he been in correspondence with that chief. The Committee felt, therefore, the less scruple in consenting to his surrender when required as a stipulation of their treaty. Yet, in spite of some such extenuating circumstances, the convention of Wargaum may justly be regarded as the most discreditable to the arms of England ever framed since they had first appeared on Indian soil. To the English, in all three Presidencies, it seemed like a Saratoga in miniature. To the French partisans throughout India it gave a bolder spirit and a louder tone. It combined, if not the whole Mahratta empire, yet several more of the Mahratta chiefs against us. It revived the hopes, and disclosed the animosity, both of the Nizam and Hyder Ali; but on the mind of the Governor-General it had no effect. As ever, that was firm and fearless. He refused to alter his plans: he refused to recall his troops. On the contrary, he at once directed

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Goddard to advance. General Goddard (for to that higher rank was he speedily promoted) justified the confidence of Hastings by his energy and skill. In his campaign of that year, and of the following, he, in great measure, retrieved and worthily maintained the honour of the British arms. At one time we see him reduce by storm the fort of Ahmedabad: at another time, by a siege, the city of Bassein. On another occasion he appears gaining a victory over the entire force, 40,000 strong, of Scindiah and Holkar combined. Meanwhile Ragoba had found early means to escape from the hands of Scindiah, and took shelter in Surat. Thus the advantages to the Mahrattas from the day of Wargaum proved fleeting and short-lived.

In a hilly district lying to the south of Agra, and bearing, at that time, the name of Gohud, Hastings waged war upon a smaller scale. With the Hindoo prince, or Rana, of that district he had concluded an alliance. The Rana being, in consequence, attacked by the Mahrattas, applied to his confederates in Bengal, and a small body of troops, under Captain Popham, was sent to his support. Not merely did Captain Popham, with little assistance from the Rana, clear Gohud from its invaders, but he carried the war into some of the Mahratta country; he besieged and reduced the city of Lahar; and he gained renown throughout the East when he took, by escalade, a rock-fortress

which was deemed impregnable—the "castled "crag" of Gwalior.*

In these and his other military measures Hastings was not left to rely upon his own unassisted judgment. At the first outbreak of the war with France the Cabinet of London had determined to send back to the Indian service the most illustrious of its veterans; the same who had led the charge at Wandewash, and received the keys of Pondicherry. Sir Eyre Coote, invested with a twofold rank as commander of the forces and as member of the Council, arrived at Calcutta in March 1779. He had no disposition to ally himself with Francis, or intrigue against Hastings; yet he gave nearly as much trouble to the latter as ever had Francis himself. The lapse of almost twenty years since his last successes had not been without effect, either on his body or his mind. He had become less active in his movements, and more fretful in his temper. A love of gain had grown up side by side with his love of glory; and, strongly impressed with his own great merits, he was ever prone to deem himself slighted or neglected. It required

* The strength of this rock-fortress appears at all times to have filled the Gwalior troops with overweening confidence. So lately as 1843, we find the Resident at Gwalior report them as "vauntingly declaring that they are come out to resist the "further advance of the Governor-General, and to make the "British force recross the Chumbul!" (Letter of Colonel Sleeman, Dec. 25. 1843. Gwalior Papers, p. 151.) Only four days afterwards, the great battle of Maharaj-poor corrected this slight misapprehension.

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constant care in Hastings to avoid or to explain away any causes of offence between them, while at the same time the Governor-General was striving to obtain for him a large increase to his allowances from the Nabob of Oude, or other less obvious quarters. These additional allowances to Sir Eyre Coote were urged, at a later period, as additional charges against Hastings himself, although he had never sought to derive from them the smallest selfish advantage, and was only zealous—too zealous it might be—to carry out his public objects by the helpmates or by the instruments, which he had not chosen, but which a higher authority assigned him.*

Neither from Sir Eyre, nor yet from Wheler, at this juncture, did Francis obtain more than occasional support—far distant from the constant concurrence of Clavering and Monson. He found, also, that by his unavailing course of opposition, all his humbler partisans were shut out from every share of patronage and power. At this juncture, therefore, he showed some readiness to relax in his hostility. On the other part, Hastings likewise had several strong motives to desire reconcilement. He wished to rid himself of a daily-recurring obstruction. He wished to release his friend Barwell,

* See Burke's Articles of Charge, xvi. sect. 36, &c. Before the close of 1779, we find Hastings thus write of Sir Eyre: — "My letters have been all friendly to him; his to me all pe- "tulant and suspicious; I know not why or for what. I bear "with him, and will bear, for I am lost if he abandons me." (Memoirs by Gleig, vol. ii. p. 242.)

who had amassed a large fortune, and who was eager to return with it to England, but who had promised to remain in India, so long as his help was needed. Under these circumstances, early in the year 1780, an engagement was concluded, according to which Francis promised to desist from systematic opposition, and to acquiesce in all the measures for the prosecution of the Mahratta war, while Hastings undertook to appoint Mr. Fowke, and some other adherents of Francis, to certain lucrative posts. On the faith of this agreement, and with the full consent of Hastings, Barwell embarked for Europe. But, only a few weeks afterwards, the old dissension at the Council-Board burst forth anew. The immediate cause was the expedition in Gohud. Hastings alleged that this was only a branch of his Mahratta war; Francis, on the contrary, maintained that this was a separate object, to which he was not pledged, and which he might freely oppose. The Governor-General, on this occasion, lost, or laid aside, his customary calmness, and in reply to a Minute of his rival, placed on record, in Council, the following words: — "I do not trust "to Mr. Francis's promises of candour, convinced "that he is incapable of it. I judge of his public "conduct by his private, which I have found to be "void of truth and honour." After such expressions Hastings may be justly charged with the entire blame of the scandal which ensued. When the Council broke up, Francis drew the Governor-General into another chamber, and read to him a

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challenge; it was accepted by Hastings, and they met on the day but one after—on the morning of the 17th of August. It was between five and six o'clock, and the sun had not yet fully risen on the sacred river and the boundless plain; but there was already the stir of life among the dusky races of Bengal. "I am ashamed," thus afterwards wrote Hastings, "to have been made an actor in "this silly affair; and I declare to you, upon my "honour, that such was my sense of it at the time "that I was much disturbed by an old woman "whose curiosity prompted her to stand by as a "spectatress." He adds: "A scene so little com- "prehended by the natives of this part of the "world, attracted others of the same stamp from "the adjacent villages to partake in the entertain- "ment."* With surprise indeed they must have gazed. None of their own most barbaric rites—neither the zealot who rushes forward to be crushed by the car of Juggernaut, nor the widow compelled to share the funeral pile of her dead lord, nor the worshipper of Siva, deeming that he gains the favour of the idol if he sheds the blood of an innocent wayfarer—none of these, when first beheld, could have more greatly amazed the island-strangers than were the Hindoos to see two members of that Council, sent over for their governance, engage in single combat, according to certain fancied rules: each seeking, as he would explain it, not to destroy the other, but only to clear him-

* To L. Sulivan, Esq., August 30. 1780.

self; each taking a careful aim at his antagonist, yet each ready, should he see that antagonist fall, to express a generous sympathy, and to staunch, to the utmost of his power, the wound which he had made.

Hastings and Francis fired at nearly the same instant; Hastings was unharmed, but Francis was shot through the side. He was conveyed to an adjacent house, where the surgeons found, that although his wound was severe, his life was not in danger. In the course of the same day Hastings sent his secretary with a message to the sick man, expressing his concern, and offering to call upon him when his health should be sufficiently restored. Francis coldly acknowledged the civility, but said, that after what had passed, the Governor-General and himself could meet only at the Council-Board. There accordingly they did meet for some weeks more; but early in the next December Francis gave up his office and returned to England. In taking that step, he did no more than fulfil an intention which, finding his influence wholly declined, he had formed even in the preceding year. At that time his position and his purpose were delineated, as follows, by his chief: "Francis is miserable; "and is weak enough to declare it, in a manner "much resembling a passionate woman whose hands "are held to prevent her from doing mischief. He "vows he will go home in November, but I do not "believe that his resolution is so fixed as he pre-"tends." *

* Letter from Warren Hastings to L. Sulivan, April 18. 1779.

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Dissension with Francis, however fierce, was no novelty to Hastings. But during the same period he had to wage a painful warfare with a former friend — Sir Elijah Impey. In the Regulating Act of 1773 the limits between the judicial and political powers which it instituted had not been duly defined. Thus it happened, that on several points in practice the Supreme Court came to clash with the Supreme Council. Moreover, the new Judges had gone out with overstrained ideas of their rights and privileges. They would scarcely acknowledge any co-ordinate authority for which they could find no precedent in Westminster Hall. "Who" — thus on one occasion spoke Mr. Justice Le Maistre — "who are the Provincial Chief and Council of "Dacca? They are no Corporation in the eye of "the law. A man might as well say that he was "commanded by the King of the Fairies as by the "Council of Dacca; because the law knows no such "body." * On these principles it happened that the most cherished customs and feelings, both of the Hindoos and of the Mussulmans, were often set at nought. It was impossible for the Governor-General to view their resentment with indifference or without an effort at redress. The consequent dissension between the Supreme Court and the Supreme Council for a long time only smouldered. At last, in the beginning of 1780, it burst into open flame. The immediate cause was the pro-

* Appendix No. 9. to the Report of the Committee of 1781; and note to Mill's History of India, vol. iv. p. 317.

gress of a suit which had been brought against a wealthy landholder, the Rajah of Cossijurah, by Cossinaut Baboo his agent at Calcutta, when the Judge issued a writ to sequester his lands and goods. For this object an armed band, consisting of sixty men and commanded by a Serjeant of the Court, was despatched to Cossijurah. The Rajah, with a just apprehension of the terrors of the law, had already fled from his house. Nevertheless it was forcibly entered by the gang of bailiffs; nor did they even shrink from breaking open the ZENANA, or the women's chambers, ever held sacred in the East amidst the worst barbarities of war. The servants of the Rajah stood at the threshold ready to resist, so far as they could resist, what they deemed the dishonour of their master, but some of them were wounded and the rest beaten back and overborne. Nor was this all. It was alleged by the Rajah, that not only had his Zenana been forced and his property plundered, but his place of worship also had been stripped of its ornaments, and his collection of revenue been prevented.

When these tidings reached Calcutta, the Governor-General, supported on this one occasion by his Council's unanimous assent, took, as was his duty, effectual measures of redress. A circular was issued to the landholders of Bengal explaining that, unless in certain specified cases, they owed no obedience to the mandates of the Supreme Court. Upon this, all patience and all prudence departed from Sir Elijah Impey and his brother Judges. Even the

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most violent steps did not seem to them too strong. They cast into prison Mr. North Naylor, the Company's attorney, merely because, as he was bound to do, he had obeyed the orders of the Council. They caused a summons to be served on every member of the Council requiring him to appear at their Bar, and to answer for his public acts. Hastings and the other members refused to obey the call. The Judges pronounced the refusal to be "a clear "contempt of His Majesty's law and of his Courts." It is difficult to say to what extremities — scarcely short of civil war — this collision might have grown, had not Cossinaut, no doubt on some secret inducements held out to him by the Governor-General, suddenly dropped his actions at law; thus depriving the Judges of all present materials upon which their wrath could build.

The immediate case might thus be dealt with, but a more permanent remedy was needed. With this view, the fertile brain of Hastings devised another scheme. Under the Act of 1773 there were certain judicial powers which belonged to the Supreme Council as a tribunal of appeal from some of the provincial Courts, but which the Supreme Council had neither sufficient time, nor yet sufficient knowledge, to exert. Hastings proposed that these powers should be henceforth vested in a Judge appointed by the Governor and Council, and removable at their pleasure, and that this newly appointed Judge should be no other than the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Such was the scheme

which, in September 1780, Hastings laid before his colleagues in the Government, and which, in spite of strenuous opposition from Francis and from Wheler, was carried through. To Francis, who almost immediately afterwards returned to England, there only remained the spiteful satisfaction of spreading far and wide among his friends and the public at home the charge, that the Chief Justice had been bribed from a course of opposition by a new salary of 8,000*l.* a year.

It must be owned, that whenever there has been strife between two persons, and whenever that strife is ended by the one accepting from the other a post of honour and of profit, we shall seldom err in casting heavy censure on the character of one or both. In this case, however, there are several circumstances of alleviation or defence which were not known to, or not weighed by, the public at the time, but which demand the careful consideration of a later age. In the first place, there appears no inconsistency in the course pursued on this occasion by Sir Elijah Impey. His proceedings on the suit of Cossinaut were already closed. On the general question, he had struggled and protested against that portion of judicial power claimed by the members of the Supreme Council; he was bound therefore to be satisfied, when those members, of their own accord, divested themselves of that judicial power, and transferred it to judicial hands. No complaint, however slight, of his reconciliation

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could surely have been raised had any other judge but himself been named to the new post. Impey would have done far better to decline it, yet it does not follow, that in accepting it his motives were all of a sordid kind. In his secret letters to his nearest kindred some weeks afterwards, while, adverting to the great additional labour which he had consented to discharge, he declares that he did so —"in "the hope that I may be able to convert these "courts which, from ignorance or corruption, have "hitherto been a curse, into a blessing. No pecu- "niary satisfaction has been offered or even men- "tioned to me." * Thus he had taken the duty without any promise of reward, although in the same private letter we find him frankly acknowledge — "but I do not imagine it is intended that "my trouble is to go unrecompensed." Some weeks afterwards the Council did accordingly determine that a salary, not, as was said, of eight thousand, but of five thousand pounds a year, should be attached to the new office.† Then, however, Sir Elijah stated, that he should refuse to accept any part of this money until the opinion of the Lord Chancellor had been asked and obtained from England. There are still extant the regular vouchers of the sums paid to the Chief Justice in pursuance of the Council's order, and paid back by him to the Company's account. And in point of

* Sir Elijah Impey to his brother in England, November 12. 1780.

† Minutes of the Revenue Council, December 22. 1780.

fact, neither then nor at any time afterwards was a single rupee of this new salary received for his own use by Sir Elijah Impey.*

The Mahratta campaign, and the altercations with Francis and with Impey, however burthensome to Hastings, were not, at this time, his only, nor yet his greatest, care. Another and more pressing danger rose in view. Hyder Ali, the mighty sovereign of Mysore, had observed, with much displeasure, the British expedition to Mahé. On several lesser points also he had been most imprudently thwarted and chafed by Sir Thomas Rumbold at Madras. With his usual energy of character, he made few complaints, but actively matured his plans. He saw that the opportunity was favourable; that the English were now entangled in a difficult war with the Mahrattas, and that a French armament was soon expected on the coast of Coromandel. He drew together an army which amounted, or at least which popular terror magnified, to 90,000 men. These forces, though wild and savage, were not wholly wanting in European discipline; they had been trained, in part, by good officers from France, and they drew into the field, with competent artillerymen, one hundred pieces of artillery.

Besides these resources of skill and of experience,

* See the facts of the case, and the documents to prove it, set forth at full length in the Memoirs of Impey, by his son, pp. 209—229. And again, pp. 256—263. The reader should be, of course, on his guard against the writer's bias, and should judge only from the documents themselves.

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there were other expedients which stand in glaring contrast to the former, but which, in the opinion of the Sovereign of Mysore, were not less conducive to success. He gave orders that, in all the temples of his capital, there should be performed, with the utmost solemnity, the mysterious rite of the JEBBUM. It is singular that both Hyder and his son Tippoo (the one at least a nominal, and the other a zealous, Mussulman) appear to have held implicit faith in the Hindoo forms of superstition which are denoted by that word. The forms are of various kinds. Sometimes, to obtain the end which the prince desires, the Brahmins stand up to their breasts in water, beating the water with their hands, and howling forth their incantations. Sometimes, with the same view, a snake of the Cobra Capella kind is suspended by the tail from the roof of the apartment, while incense is burned at a fire kindled immediately below. In all these ceremonies, the presence of salt was deemed as unlucky as the spilling it in England.*

The Government of Madras was, almost to the last, unconscious of its danger. Early in April 1780, Sir Thomas Rumbold had sailed for England, congratulating himself, in the final Minute he recorded, that all was tranquil, and that no disturbance

* See Colonel Wilks's South of India, vol. ii. p. 254. note. Our own superstition as to salt-spilling has, in all probability, an Eastern origin. But there is a curious passage in Cervantes, showing that at one time in Spain it was confined to the members of a single noble family — the Mendozas. (Don Quixote, ch. 58. vol. vii. p. 154. ed. Paris, 1814.)

of the calm was to be feared. His successor, Mr. Whitehill, was a man wholly unequal to the charge. Almost the same might be said of Sir Hector Munro, the commander of the forces; for either age or climate had dealt hardly with the hero of Buxar. Thus the English chiefs were nearly taken by surprise, when, in the height of summer, the horsemen of Mysore, the vanguard of Hyder's army, came dashing down the passes that lead from their wild hills. This was the invasion which some years afterwards was described with so much glowing eloquence by Burke. This was the "black "cloud that hung for a while on the declivities of "the mountains." This was the "menacing "meteor which blackened all the horizon until it "suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of "its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic." *

At the approach of Hyder's army, the frontier-posts, held by Sepoys, surrendered with but slight resistance; and his onward progress was marked by fire and the sword. From the summit of St. Thomas's Mount the people of Madras could see, on the horizon, columns of dark smoke ascend from the burning villages. The ladies and the children (and may we not include some gentlemen?) were filled with terror and affright. Their gay villas around the city were forsaken, while the narrow space behind the cannon of Fort St. George

* Speech on the Nabob of Arcot's debts, February 28. 1785. The first germ of this fine passage lies perhaps in the κατ' ὀλιγον ὡσπερ νεφος of Demosthenes περι του στεφανου.

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was thronged. In the field there were already some not wholly inconsiderable forces. Sir Hector Munro had above five thousand men, and Colonel Baillie above three. Some active and useful aid to these forces was expected from the constant ally of England, the Nabob of Arcot. A Mussulman noble, sent by that potentate, did accordingly arrive, with great ceremony, at Sir Hector's camp. He said to Munro that he was ordered, by Mahomed Ali, to attend him, but had no powers given him to procure either provisions or intelligence—the only two things needed. "As I wanted neither a "valet nor a cook," says the General, "I told the "gentleman I would dispense with his services!"*

Had Baillie and Munro at once combined their forces, as they might and should, it seems probable, from the much larger number of Europeans in their ranks, that they might have stood firm against all the armies of Mysore. But their torpor, or perhaps their jealousy, delayed them, and thus enabled Hyder to assail them singly, while yet only a few miles asunder. On the 10th of September the troops of Baillie were overwhelmed and cut to pieces. A similar fate might have befallen Munro had he not saved himself by a precipitate retreat towards Mount St. Thomas, first casting his artillery into the tanks, and relinquishing his baggage and stores. Thus only the walled towns remained to the English: all the open country was, or would be, Hyder's.

* Wilks's South of India, vol. ii. p. 268.

A swift-sailing ship, despatched for the express purpose, brought these ill tidings to Calcutta on the 23rd of the same month. On no occasion, either before or since, were the genius, the energy, the master-spirit of Hastings more signally displayed. In a single day he framed a new system of policy, renouncing his late favourite schemes, and contemplating only the altered state of public affairs. In his own words — "All my hopes of "aggrandising the British name and enlarging the "interests of the Company, gave instant place to "the more urgent call to support the existence of "both in the Carnatic; nor did I hesitate a moment "to abandon my own views for such an object. "The Mahratta war has been, and is yet, called "mine. God knows why. I was forced into it. "It began with the acts of others unknown to me. "I never professed any other design but to support "the Presidency of Bombay, if it had succeeded "in the plans which it had formed, or to protect "and save them if they failed. . . . . Perhaps "the war with Hyder may be, in like manner, "called my war."*

On the 25th the Council met. The Governor-General proposed, that a treaty not merely of peace but of alliance should be tendered to the Mahrattas, yielding the main points at issue in the war; that every soldier available in Bengal should at once be shipped off to Madras; that fifteen Lacs of Rupees should without delay be despatched to the same

* Letter to L. Sulivan, Esq., October 28. 1780.

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quarter; that Sir Eyre Coote, as alone sufficient, should be requested to assume the chief command against Mysore; and that the powers allowed to the Supreme Presidency by the Act of 1773 should be strained to the utmost, by superseding Mr. Whitehill, the new and incapable Governor of Fort St. George. Francis, whose hatreds were as usual much stronger than his patriotism, raised his voice almost for the last time in India to declare, that he would have sent only one half of the money and none of the troops. Nevertheless, the proposals of Hastings were carried through, and Sir Eyre Coote obeyed the honourable call to the scenes of his past glory. In the first days of November he landed at Madras. No sooner had he taken his seat in Council, than he produced the document from Hastings suspending Mr. Whitehill. That gentleman, though taken by surprise, attempted some faint demur, but, the majority of the Council acquiescing, he was compelled to retire, and the member next in seniority succeeded to the Chair.

Hyder Ali, since his great successes over Baillie and Munro, had reduced the fort of Arcot, and was besieging Wandewash and Vellore. But the arrival of the new commander and of the reinforcements from Bengal struck his mind with awe. He raised the siege of both places when, in January 1781, he saw Coote take the field, though still with most scanty forces and inadequate supplies. Sir Eyre, apprehensive of a rising among the French so lately subdued, next marched south and encamped on

the Red Hills of Pondicherry. Later in the season he advanced to Porto Novo, a haven some forty miles further to the southward. There, on the 1st of July, he succeeded in bringing Hyder to a battle. He had only between eight and nine thousand men to oppose to the myriads of Mysore. Yet such was the ascendancy of European valour and European skill, that after six hours of conflict Hyder's forces fled in utter disarray, leaving on the field several thousand dead and wounded, while upon the side of the English the loss scarcely exceeded four hundred men.

Hyder himself had watched the progress of the battle from a small eminence, seated cross-legged on a stool. Amazed at his own reverses, he could scarce believe his eyes; and when some of his followers suggested that it was time to move, he answered them only by a torrent of abuse. At last, a groom who had long served him and was, in some sort, a privileged man, boldly seized his master's feet and forced on his slippers; exclaiming as he thus equipped him for flight: "We will beat "them to-morrow; in the meanwhile mount your "horse!" Hyder took the counsel, and was quickly beyond the reach of danger.

The victory at Porto Novo was not left unimproved by Coote. He turned, and with good effect, towards Wandewash, which was again besieged. "Wandewash is safe" — thus he wrote to the Government of Madras — "it being the third time "in my life I have had the honour to relieve it."

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Hyder then fell back to what he deemed a lucky spot, as it certainly was a strong position; the very ground on which, in the preceding year, he had defeated Baillie. There, on the 27th of August, he engaged in another battle with Sir Eyre. In this action, to which a neighbouring village gave its name of Pollilore, the ground was so unfavourable to the English, that Sir Hector Munro, who commanded the first line, could not forbear a remonstrance to his chief. "You talk to me, Sir, "when you should be doing your duty!" — such was the stern reply; a reply which, rankling in the mind of Munro, caused him to retire from active service to Madras, and from thence next year to England.* The results of Pollilore were far less decisive, and purchased by much heavier sacrifice than those of Porto Novo; yet still, at the close, the flight of Hyder from his chosen ground left to Coote, undoubtedly, both the honour and the advantage of the day. The open country was recovered; and the Carnatic was saved.

From Calcutta the Governor-General had lost no time in commencing a negotiation for peace with the Mahrattas. But this was long protracted by the number of their chiefs, and the intricacy of the relations between them; and it was not till the

* Sir Hector survived till 1806, dying quietly at his seat in Ross-shire. (Ann. Regist. for that year, p. 366.) Some years before, his son, a young officer serving in Bengal, was killed by a Royal tiger, "which," says an eye-witness, "rushed into "the jungle with him with as much ease as I could lift a "kitten!" (Ibid. 1793, p. 31.)

spring of 1782 that the treaties were finally concluded at Salbye. Meanwhile, the entire strain of the war, both with Poonah and Mysore, fell upon the Presidency of Bengal, from which, nevertheless, large remittances were still expected by the Directors and Proprietors at home. Under these pressing circumstances, Hastings was compelled to seek new sources of supply. He thought himself entitled to call for aid from the great feudatories or vassals of his power, and, above all, from Cheyte Sing, the Rajah of Benares.

Benares — a city of above half a million of inhabitants, pent up in narrow alleys, through none of which a wheel-carriage could pass — may be regarded as the centre and the capital of the Hindoo superstitions. The Ganges, though everywhere revered as holy, is yet deemed more holy at Benares than at any other portion of its course. Every man, say the Brahmins, who dies in the sacred city, and is cast into the sacred stream, is sure of acceptance on high — even though he may have committed enormous crimes, and even though he may have been an eater of beef! The only other requisite condition is, that he should be bountiful "to the "poor Brahmins." Long flights of steps, ever crowded with pious bathers, are here seen in downward succession to the stream. Here, the temples are many and magnificent. From each of these discordant strains of music, such as the Hindoos love, resound. The bulls devoted to Siva, tame and familiar as mastiffs, walk lazily up and down

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the narrow streets. The monkeys, sacred to Hunimaun, that divine ape who, as the Brahmins assure us, was the conqueror of Ceylon, are not less numerous, clinging to all the roofs and little projections of the temples, thrusting, as they chatter, their heads and hands into every fruiterer's shop, or snatching the food from the children at their meals. Hideous acts and attitudes of penance are displayed on every side by religious mendicants disfigured alike by nature and by skill, — by chalk, — by cow-dung, — by disease, — while, on the contrary, a never-failing income is derived from the concourse and the charity of the wealthier pilgrims.*

The city and district of Benares formed a small state, ruled by a Hindoo prince, but tributary to the Mussulmans of Oude. In 1774, however, the Nabob of Oude, in a treaty with the English, yielded to them all his rights upon Benares; and since that time Cheyte Sing, the Rajah, had punctually transmitted his tribute to Calcutta. It has been contended, that beyond the exact payment of this stipulated sum Cheyte Sing owed nothing to the English. On the contrary, Hastings held, that the Company, like other suzerains, might, in extraordinary perils, claim from its vassals some extraor-

* Bishop Heber's Diary (vol. i. pp. 371—400. ed. 1828) contains a most animated and picturesque description of Benares, from which the particulars of mine are drawn. As he passed through the holy places, the Bishop complains of the vast number of garlands which in compliment were hung around his neck; "until at last," he says, "I looked more like a "sacrifice than a Priest!"

dinary aid. At the outbreak of the Mahratta war in 1778, I have already shown how the Governor-General exacted from Benares three new battalions of Sepoys. The first demand was only for one year, but as the war went on it was annually renewed. Cheyte Sing murmured and remonstrated in vain. At last, according to the fashion of the East, he thought to put an end to further requisitions by offering to Hastings for his own use a present of two Lacs of Rupees. The conduct of Hastings in this transaction is not quite clear. He took the money, and for a time concealed it both from the Bengal Council and from the Directors at home. After some interval, however, he placed it to the Company's account, and sternly intimated to the Rajah, that the five Lacs required for the Sepoys must be paid as before — adding shortly afterwards one Lac more as a fine for evasion and delay.*

In referring to this case, it should be borne in mind that Cheyte Sing was known to be rich, and supposed to be ill-affected. Notwithstanding all

* The points against Hastings in this affair are wrought out in full relief by Burke in his Articles of Charge (iii. and viii.) and the explanations by Hastings himself (in 1782 and 1785) can scarcely be thought conclusive. But great attention is due to the judgment passed by Professor Wilson in his notes upon Mill (vol. iv. p. 373.): "It appeared in evidence, that Hast-"ings communicated all the circumstances relating to this "present to the Accountant-General, who received the money, "&c. It is undeniable, therefore, that Hastings never intended "to appropriate this money to his own use." (See the Minutes of Evidence, 1155. 2747.)

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his pleas of poverty, he had certainly amassed considerable treasure. He had done his best to foment and aggravate the dissensions in the Council in the time of Clavering; and at that time showed a disposition to take part against Hastings. It may be, without want of charity, presumed that, besides the public exigencies, Hastings was likewise in some measure swayed by a feeling of revenge. New demands upon Cheyte Sing were now poured in so thick and fast as to show a predetermination of driving him to refusal and resistance, and thence to ruin. The Rajah, at last seriously alarmed, tendered as a peace-offering the sum of 200,000*l*. But Hastings declared that he would be content with nothing short of half a million.

Such was the critical state to which this question had grown in the summer of 1781. Then, the designs of Hastings upon Benares, as also some others which he had in view for Oude, seemed to need his personal presence and direction. Besides himself, there was remaining only one member of the Council, Mr. Wheler. That gentleman was prevailed upon to delegate his authority to his chief; and thus armed with the full powers of the Council, the Governor-General set out for the north-western provinces. He travelled with little of pomp or state, and even beyond the frontier with only a few score of Sepoys. Indeed, it well deserves attention, that the greatest of the English in India—the rulers whose sway over the minds

of the natives has been strongest — did not resort to, or rely upon, those pageantries in which the natives are supposed to take delight. There is a remarkable testimony to that effect, as to both Clive and Hastings, from a Frenchman by birth, and a Mussulman by adoption, who had resided in India during a long course of years. He states, that he well remembers, in 1755, the magnificence of M. de Bussy and the other French chiefs in the Deccan. He states, that Bussy always wore a dress of rich brocade, with embroidered hat and shoes; his table, always in plate, was served with three, often with four courses; he sat upon a kind of throne, with the arms of his King in relief; and, whenever he stirred from home, he was mounted on an elephant, preceded by a band of musicians, singing his feats of chivalry, and followed by two head-Chobdars, reciting his eulogium! On the contrary, continues the Frenchman, "Colonel "Clive always wore his regimentals in the field, "was always on horseback, and never in a palan-"quin; he had a plentiful table, but no ways "delicate, and never more than two courses. He "used to march mostly at the head of the column, "with his aides-de-camp, or was hunting at the "right and left. Governor Hastings always wore "a plain coat of English broadcloth; and never "anything like lace or embroidery. His whole "retinue a dozen of horseguards; his throne a "plain chair of mahogany, with plenty of such "thrones in the hall; his table sometimes ne-

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"glected; his diet sparing and always abstemious; "his address and deportment very distant from "pride and still more so from familiarity." *

The Governor-General arrived at Benares on the 14th of August, 1781. Cheyte Sing had gone forth many miles to meet him, with every mark of honour, and with the humblest professions of respect. Nay, on entering the Governor's pinnace, he even took off his turban and laid it on the lap of Hastings —a symbol to denote his unlimited submission. Hastings, with whom mere forms had little weight, received all these compliments with coldness. He sternly refused a visit from the Rajah in Benares, and next morning sent to him the Resident, with a paper of complaints and demands. These Cheyte Sing attempted to explain or evade. Without further parley, Hastings put him under arrest; sending two companies of Sepoys to guard him as a prisoner in his palace.

"The Rajah"—such was the report of the English Resident to Hastings—"submitted quietly to "the arrest; and assured me that, whatever were "your orders, he was ready to obey." But not such were the feelings of his people. It was no light thing for an European chief to seize the person of a Hindoo Prince in the very sanctuary and stronghold of the Hindoo superstitions. The multitude gathered in the streets, confident in their growing numbers. They might also expect some aid from the holy bulls, or the not less holy apes, that they

* Note by the first translator of the Seïr Mutakhareen, vol. iii. p. 150. ed. Calcutta, 1789.

saw around them. From outcries and threats they quickly, passed to blows. By a strange neglect the two companies of Sepoys round the palace had come without ammunition; consequently they were soon overpowered. Two other companies sent for their support were surrounded and cut to pieces in the narrow alleys. Hastings had then left, for his own protection, no more than fifty men. With these he barricaded the house in which he had taken up his residence, but could not, long together, have maintained it against a mob which he describes as "about two thousand, furious and daring from "the easy success of their last attempt."—"Cheyte "Sing," he adds, in a more private letter, "had me "at his mercy at Benares if the wretch had known "his advantage." *

Happily for Hastings, the thought which at this time was uppermost in Cheyte Sing's mind was not for victory or vengeance, but only for escape. In the midst of the confusion, he made his way from his palace by a secret postern, which opened to the Ganges. The bank was precipitous, but he was let down, as from a wall, by a line of his attendants' turbans tied together; and, finding a boat, was rowed over to the opposite shore. There he was quickly joined by his principal adherents from the city of Benares, and he began to muster troops. Still, however, it was mainly to a reconciliation that his wishes turned. He addressed to the Governor-

* To Major Scott, January 1. 1782. Memoirs by Gleig, vol. ii. p. 420.

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General a petition, abounding with apologies for the past, and offers of allegiance for the future.

Through all the storm that raged around him the equable mind of Hastings was never for a moment stirred. So far from making any concession to Cheyte Sing, he did not even vouchsafe him a reply. He carefully refrained from spreading any superfluous alarm by his communications either with Bengal or Oude. Yet his pen was not idle. He wrote to the nearest officers within the British territory to require aid. He wrote to Mrs. Hastings, whom he had left at Monghir, to inform her of his safety. And lastly—with the same perfect calmness and self-command as when seated quietly in his chamber at Calcutta, or beneath his garden-trees at Allipore —he wrote to the agent charged to treat with the Mahratta chiefs, giving him such detailed instructions as by the last advices that negotiation needed. The sure conveyance of these letters was now no easy task; but here again the fertile mind of Hastings was ready with a scheme. Having reduced them to the smallest compass, and rolled them into pieces of quill, he intrusted them to some well-tried HIRCARRAHS, or Hindoo messengers, who, by his orders, taking out their ear-rings, concealed them in their ears. Thus did these men pass safely and without detection through the hostile throng.

Meanwhile, although the chief part of the insurgents had left Benares, and joined the prince beyond the river, the position of Hastings in the

city continued full of peril. Not only was the insurrection general through the district of Benares; it was spreading through great part of the misgoverned state of Oude; it was threatening even the British province of Bahar. New passions began to ferment, and new hopes to rise. Cheyte Sing himself, instead of further pleas for mercy, was beginning to dream of conquest and revenge. Hastings and his small band, even though reinforced by some recruits, and by the boatmen who had brought them to Benares, could no longer hope to maintain themselves as a mere vanguard in the midst of foes. He set forth from the city by night, yet not unobserved, the rabble hooting him as he rode along with a jingling rhyme, not yet forgotten in Benares.* Unassailed, however, on this occasion, except in words, he made his way successfully to the rock-fortress of Chunar. There he was quickly joined by a protecting force; at its head the brave and enterprising Major Popham, the conqueror of Gualior. Against such troops, and such a chief, the rabble of Cheyte Sing, now swelled to forty

* "Hat' hee pur howdah, ghore pur jeen
"Juldee bah'r jata Sahib Wârren Husteen!"

"Horse, elephant, howdah, set off at full speed,
"Ride away my Lord Warren Hastings!"

"It is a nursery rhyme which is often sung to children (at Benares)," says Bishop Heber. (Journals, vol. i. p. 458. ed. 1828.) Both the Bishop and another eminent writer of our own day appear to be in error when they consider this a song in praise of Hastings instead of in triumph over him. See a note to Impey's Memoirs of Sir Elijah, p. 234.

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thousand, could not stand. The Hindoo prince was utterly routed and driven from his states. One of his kinsmen was in his stead named Rajah of Benares, but his yearly tribute was raised to forty Lacs of Rupees, and he became on all points a mere stipendiary and subject of the English, soon to be removed, as he had been appointed, by their sovereign will. Nothing was left to Cheyte Sing beyond the fortress of Bidgegur, which held his treasure, and which the princess his mother defended. After a siege of several weeks the place was reduced by Major Popham. The treasure—after all Cheyte Sing's pleas of utter poverty, at the commencement of the contest—was found to exceed in value 250,000*l*. But it did not, as Hastings hoped, go to replenish the coffers of Bengal; it was seized by the army as prize. The fault here lay mainly in the Governor-General himself; in his own hasty letters and own inconsiderate expressions, during the heat of the siege.

On reviewing the whole of this transaction, which in the impeachment of Hastings formed the great Benares charge, we find its real facts utterly distorted by the ardour of both sides. While Fox and Burke, in urging it, allege the vilest motives and most heinous crimes, not even the shadow of an indiscretion is allowed by Mr. Nicholls, or by Major Scott. Between the two extreme parties, thus fiercely warring upon Indian affairs, there arose a great Minister, free from any party-trammels with either. The judgment of Mr. Pitt, expressed,

for the first time, in his speech of June, 1786, was formed, as he states, after a long and laborious study of the question. On nearly all points he approved the course of Hastings. He maintained that the Governor-General was entitled to consider Cheyte Sing as a feudatory prince, and to call upon him for extraordinary aid. He maintained that Cheyte Sing had shown contumacy in refusing such aid; and that, in punishment of his contumacy, Hastings had good right to impose on him a fine. "But," continued Mr Pitt, "in fining the Rajah "500,000*l.* for a mere delay to pay 50,000*l.*, which "50,000*l.* he had actually paid, Mr. Hastings pro-"ceeded in an arbitrary, tyrannical manner, and "was not guided by any principle of reason and "justice. This proceeding destroyed all relation "and connection between the degrees of guilt "and punishment; . . . . that punishment was "utterly disproportionate and shamefully exorbi-"tant."* These weighty words did not merely at that time prevail—did not merely, then, in fact, decide the great question of the day — Impeachment or no Impeachment; but they are now, as I conceive, confirmed and ratified by the voice of History. It is on that point, and that point alone, in the Benares Charge, the exorbitancy of the fine, that the voice of History may pronounce Hastings to have erred, no doubt led astray by his personal resentment and rancour against Cheyte Sing. An objection has indeed been raised to Mr. Pitt's dis-

* Parl. Hist. vol. xxvi. p. 111.

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criminating censure, as though it were not adequate to support a vote of condemnation, since the question of a larger or a lesser fine can be no more than a difference in degree. Yet what is it but a difference in degree, that with children, for example, separates the chastisement which the legislator praises from that which he is bound to punish—the chastisement which aims at correction from the chastisement tending to maim and to deform? Not far dissimilar, surely, is the relation of a liege-lord to his vassals, where the duty of protection goes side by side with the right of control.

If Hastings could have felt remorse—a feeling almost alien from his nature—he might have felt it when he found his aim in all this violence, the treasure at Bidgegur, diverted by his soldiers from the public uses which he had designed. But he only turned with the keener energy to his projects upon Oude. We have seen how, in 1775, Sujah Dowlah was succeeded, as Nabob and Visier, by his son Asaph ul Dowlah. One of the first acts of the new prince was to remove the seat of his government from Fyzabad to the rising city of Lucknow.* There remained, however, as sojourners in the palace of Fyzabad, the grandmother of the young Sovereign, and also his mother, the widow of Sujah Dowlah. These aged ladies were called the Begums or Princesses of Oude.† They had kept

* Hamilton's East India Gazetteer, vol. ii. p. 132.

† "*Begum* is a title of Turkish origin and the feminine of "*Beg*, which signifies Prince, both in Tartary and Turkey,

possession of Sujah Dowlah's treasure, amounting, it was said, to upwards of 3,000,000*l.* They had also vast Jaghires, and maintained a princely state. On the other hand, Asaph ul Dowlah showed himself so careless and so prodigal, that he soon grew poor. Wholly given up to the most disgraceful vices, and lavishing his own Crown lands upon his minions, he neglected the welfare and aroused the resentment of his people. To secure himself from the effects of that resentment, and of his neighbours' warlike enterprises, he had asked the help of a British brigade. It had been most readily granted by Hastings, who foresaw that it would reduce him to the rank of a dependent prince, and who added the condition, that the Visier should defray its entire cost and charge. Under these circumstances, it was not long before the Visier's payments fell into arrear. He earnestly pleaded for the withdrawal of the troops, or for the remission of the money, at the very time when the Governor-General was bending his whole thoughts to the possible means of obtaining some further aid.

On planning his north-western journey, Hastings had determined that, as soon as he had closed the affairs of Benares, he would take in hand those of Oude, and repair in person to Lucknow. His visit was anticipated by the eagerness of Asaph ul Dowlah, who came forth beyond the frontier to meet him. The Governor-General and the Visier

"but means no more than a trooper, both in Persia and in "India." (Note to the Seir Mutakhareen, vol. i. p. 297.)

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passed several days together in the rock-fortress of Chunar. There it was that Hastings first unfolded his grand scheme for the relief of both. He proposed that Asaph ul Dowlah should resume the domains which he had improvidently granted, and also those which his father had bequeathed. But it was not merely in this manner that the Begums were to be despoiled. Another part of the scheme was to wring from them the larger portion of their treasure, the money thus accruing to be accepted by the English in liquidation of the arrears which they claimed from Oude.

In this plan of Hastings for despoiling the princesses he had not even the merit of original invention. The idea was so simple and easy, that it had long since occurred, without prompting, to the mind of the Visier. He had at various times obtained from his mother and his grandame sums amounting to 630,000*l.* Against the last of these payments they had struggled to the utmost of their power. Nor did they yield until the Visier at last agreed to a treaty pledging himself on no account or pretence to make any further demand upon them; and to this treaty they had obtained the guarantee of the Council of Bengal, through the ascendancy, at that time, of Clavering and Monson, and contrary to the wish of Hastings. Thus then the faith of the English government was clearly pledged against the very course which an English Governor was attempting to pursue.

Let it not be thought, however, that Hastings

wanted (did ever an oppressor want?) pleas for his oppression. First, he might allege, with some show of reason, that, according to the Mahomedan law, the treasure of the late Visier belonged, of right, not to the widow, but to the son. Next he might point to the depositions of numerous witnesses, that upon the news of the outbreak in Benares some retainers of the two Begums had stirred up insurrection in Oude. It so happened that Sir Elijah Impey was at this very time engaged in a tour through the upper provinces—a tour which he had undertaken partly for recreation and health, and partly, as was his duty, to inspect the local courts. He now offered Hastings to proceed to Lucknow, and receive the depositions of these witnesses in regular form. The offer was gladly accepted, and the depositions were accordingly received. From these it might, perhaps, be clear that some of the Begums' people had been concerned in the late disturbance; but there was no proof whatever to show that they had acted by the order, or even with the knowledge, of the aged ladies. Above all, it is to be borne in mind that no opportunity was ever allowed the princesses to be heard in their own defence. Yet it was upon such wholly one-sided testimony that Hastings mainly relied for his own justification. "Let "this," he wrote to a friend in London, "let "this be an answer to the men of virtue who may "exclaim against our breach of faith, and the in- "humanity of dealing war against widows, prin-

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"cesses of high birth, and defenceless old women "— These old women had very nigh effected our "destruction." *

It was in September, 1781, that the Governor-General and the Visier signed a treaty at Chunar, according to the terms which the former had proposed. Then they parted. Hastings followed in the train of his victorious troops to Benares, and from thence returned to Bengal, while Asaph ul Dowlah wended back his way to Oude. With the assistance of Mr. Middleton, the English Resident at his Court, he prepared to carry into effect his stipulations. But, in resuming the grants of land, he had to encounter the most vehement remonstrances, both from his mother and his minions. His heart was moved by some touch of pity or of shame. Even Mr. Middleton, though the devoted friend, or, to speak more truly perhaps, the humble servant, of the Governor-General, faltered at the long course of exaction that lay before him. Hastings alone was, as ever, unbending, cold, and hard. He sternly reminded the Visier of their plighted compact. He bade, in the most peremptory terms, the Resident proceed on his instructions. "If "you," he added, "cannot rely on your own "firmness, I will free you from these charges; I "will myself proceed to Lucknow; I will myself "undertake them." †

* To L. Sulivan, Esq., February 21. 1782.

† Letter, December 25. 1781. Burke's Articles of Charge, IV. sec. 12.

Thus spurred on, both the Visier and the Resident, though wincing, began to move. The Jaghires of the two princesses were forcibly resumed. The city and palace of Fyzabad, in which they dwelt, were surrounded and reduced by a body of British troops. Still, however, the Begums would not part with any portion of their hidden treasure. The difficulty was how to discover or lay hands upon it without profaning, as the races of the East conceive, the sacred bounds of the Zenana. It was resolved to arrest and confine two aged Eunuchs, the heads of the household, and the principal Ministers of the princesses. These men were cast into prison, and loaded with irons; and, on finding them obdurate, an order was issued in January, 1782, that until they yielded they should be debarred from all food. This order, to the shame and opprobrium not only of himself and his employer, but even of the English name in India, bore the signature —I am pained to own it—of Nathaniel Middleton.

To the pangs of hunger the aged Ministers gave way, and within two days agreed to disburse the sum which was then required. But that sum was only a part of the whole demand. To extort the rest other most rigorous measures were employed. The two prisoners were removed from Fyzabad to Lucknow. The weight of their irons was increased; torture was threatened, and perhaps inflicted; certain it is, at least, that every facility was granted by the British Assistant Resident to the officers of the Visier, who were sent for that purpose to the

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prison-house. Meanwhile at Fyzabad the palace-gates of the princesses continued to be strictly guarded. Food was allowed to enter, but not always in sufficient quantities for the number of the inmates, so that the Begums might be wrought upon by the distress of their attendants. "The "melancholy cries of famine," says a British officer upon the spot, "are more easily imagined than "described." Thus, through the greater part of 1782, severity followed severity, and sum was exacted after sum. The Ministers were not set free, nor the princesses relieved from duresse until after there had been obtained from them treasure exceeding in amount one million sterling. Notwithstanding all their pleas of poverty—pleas perfectly justifiable in the face of such oppression—there was still remaining in their hands property to the value of at least one million more.

It has been urged, yet surely without good reason, that for these acts of barbarity the Visier upon the spot, rather than the Governor-General at a distance, should be held responsible. It has also been contended, that they were no necessary consequence of the original scheme, as framed at Chunar, for despoiling the Dowagers of Oude. And, as regards that scheme, the later apologists of Hastings, discarding for the most part the flimsy pretexts which he put forward at the time, prefer to take their stand on the broad ground that large supplies of money were absolutely needed for the prosecution of the war; and that we should have

lost India if we had not plundered the Begums. Certainly, in one respect at least, Hastings may deserve to be far distinguished above the long line of robber-magistrates in story — from Verres the prætor, down to Monsieur Rapinat. * He plundered for the benefit of the State, and not for his own. His main thought was ever, that he had a great empire to save — and he did save it. Yet, with all due appreciation of his object, and with all due allowance for his difficulties, his conduct to the princesses of Oude appears to me incapable of any valid vindication, and must be condemned as alike repugnant to the principles of justice and humanity.

Rumours of abuses in India — of wrangling Councils, rapacious Governors, unjust judges, and unnecessary wars — had for some time past already crossed the seas to England. Lord North, sore pressed on other questions, had no motive for resisting, and did not resist, inquiry upon these. In the course of 1781, he agreed to or proposed the

* Of Rapinat, who was Commissioner of the Directory in Switzerland, it is said by M. Michaud in the Supplement to the Biog. Univ.: "Il dut une grande célébrité beaucoup plus à "la bizarrerie de son nom qu'à ses déprédations, qui au fond "ne furent pas plus considérables que celles de tant d'autres." Here is one of the epigrams against him, which may at least deserve to be ranked with the *hog's broth* quibble — the *Jus Verrinum* — of Cicero:

"Un pauvre Suisse que l'on ruine
"Desire fort qu'on expliquat,
"Si Rapinat vient de rapine
"Ou bien rapine de Rapinat!"

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appointment of two Committees of the House of Commons; the one "Select," to consider the state of the administration of justice in Bengal; the other "Secret," to investigate the causes of the war in the Carnatic. The first Committee had for Chairman General Richard Smith, a member of the Opposition; and among its most zealous and untiring members was Edmund Burke. The second, on the contrary, was presided over by a member of the Government — Henry Dundas, at that time Lord Advocate of Scotland. Each Committee presented several able Reports, and collected a great mass of important evidence. Neither Committee showed any tenderness to Hastings. All the worst points in his administration, and, above all, his war with the Rohillas, were unsparingly dragged to light. Impey also was severely censured for his acceptance of the new judicial office created by the Council of Bengal. The case of both of these high functionaries was brought before the House of Commons at nearly the same time, but, as will presently be seen, with very different results.

In May, 1782, General Smith moved an Address to the King, praying that His Majesty would recall Sir Elijah Impey "to answer to the charge of having accepted an office granted by, and tenable "at the pleasure of, the servants of the East India "Company, which has a tendency to create a dependence in the Supreme Court of Judicature "upon those over whose actions the said Court "was intended as a control." This Address ap-

pears to have been carried without either division or debate. In the July following Sir Elijah was accordingly summoned home by a letter from the Secretary of State, Lord Shelburne. He returned to England, but several years elapsed before that or any other charge against him came to be publicly preferred.

In April, 1782, the main results of the knowledge gathered in the Secret Committee upon Indian wars and Indian policy were unfolded to the House by Mr. Dundas in a lucid and most able speech of three hours. It was then, perhaps, more than on any previous occasion, that he fully showed or saw acknowledged the mastery of debate which he so long retained. A few weeks later he moved a more specific Resolution against Hastings, purporting that it was the duty of the Court of Directors to remove the Governor-General, he "having, in sundry instances, acted in a manner repugnant to "the honour and policy of this nation." The Rockingham Ministry, urged forward by the fiery vehemence of Burke, gave their support to this Resolution; and no other considerable party in Parliament opposed it. The Court of Directors also, in compliance with its terms, soon afterwards voted an Order of Recall. But when in the October following that Order of Recall came before the Court of Proprietors, the scene was wholly changed. A large majority of the Proprietors showed themselves the steady friends of Hastings. They observed that the wish of only one of the branches

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of the Legislature had no claim on their obedience; and that the law, as it then stood, gave the right of removing a Governor-General, not to the House of Commons, nor yet to the Ministers of the Crown, but solely to the Court of Directors, subject to their own control. Under these circumstances—deeming the abilities of Hastings essential to the administration of affairs in India—encouraged also in their views, on seeing that since the Parliamentary proceedings Lord Rockingham had died, and Burke seceded from office—they resolutely rescinded the Order of Recall. They were the better able to pursue an independent course on this occasion, since in 1781 Lord North had passed an Act extending their Constitutional powers for a period of ten years.

Thus was Hastings upheld at his post; thus might his energies still maintain the varying fortunes of the war in the Carnatic. To that war he continued to apply most strenuously all the men and all the money he could raise. His public-spirited endeavours were well seconded by those of the new Governor of Fort St. George, Lord Macartney, who had gained some reputation by negotiating a treaty of commerce with Russia, and who mainly on that ground had been appointed to Madras. Lord Macartney brought out from England the news of the Declaration of War against the Dutch; and it became one of his first objects to reduce the settlements which they possessed on the coasts of Coromandel and Ceylon. But he found unexpected

difficulties, from the failing health and froward temper of Sir Eyre Coote. That brave old veteran, suffering about this very time from a stroke of palsy, was ever imagining that he was insulted, and declaring that he would resign. It was requisite—thus wrote Lord Macartney at the time—"to court him like a mistress and to humour him "like a child." Hopeless of co-operation from the General in chief, the Governor resolved to act on his own resources. He called out the Militia of Madras, and, putting himself at their head, reduced the Dutch factories at Sadras and Pulicat. Next he fitted out a more considerable expedition against the more important settlement of Negapatam; and he prevailed upon Sir Hector Munro to accept the command, Sir Hector being then on ill terms with Sir Eyre, and waiting at Madras for a passage to England. In November, 1781, Negapatam was accordingly besieged and taken, several thousand Dutch troops, after a resolute resistance, being made prisoners on this occasion. Inspirited by that exploit, a body of 500 men was put on board the fleet, and sent to the attack of Fort Ostenburg and Trincomalee, in the Island of Ceylon. This service, also, was no less successfully performed, but was much more than counterbalanced by the disaster which, in February, 1782, befel another British detachment in the district of Tanjore. There Colonel Brathwaite, at the head of 100 Europeans and 1,800 Sepoys, found himself surrounded and surprised by an army of Mysore,

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under Hyder's son Tippoo, and M. Lally. He and his men fought most bravely, but at last were overpowered by superior numbers; and all either cut to pieces or taken captive and consigned to the dungeons of Seringapatam.

In the same month of February, 1782, the armament from France, so long expected, appeared off the coast of Coromandel. Its command had devolved on De Suffren, one of the best seamen whom his country can boast. He had been trained in the Order of the Knights of Malta, who at this time conferred upon him the high rank of their BAILLI. Ready, bold, and enterprising, of most active habits although of most unwieldy size, he was likewise never wanting in judgment or in skill. Already, on his outward voyage, he had fought a pitched battle with an English squadron at Porto Praya, in one of the Cape de Verd Islands. By his prompt arrival at the Cape of Good Hope he had secured that colony against the same squadron for his new allies the Dutch. In India it was one of his first cares to land at Porto Novo 2,000 French soldiers whom he had on board, to form, with their countrymen already serving, an auxiliary force to the armies of Mysore. These troops being joined by Tippoo, flushed as he was then with his triumph over Colonel Brathwaite, they proceeded in conjunction to invest Cuddalore, a seaport town between Porto Novo and Pondicherry. Having to encounter only a feeble garrison of 400 men, they easily prevailed in their attack; and Cuddalore, thus wrested from the English, became of great im-

portance to the French, both as a place of arms and as a harbour, during the whole remainder of the war.

It so chanced, that at the very time when the armament from France appeared in the Indian seas, the British fleet in that quarter was seasonably reinforced by several new ships from England. M. de Suffren and Sir Edward Hughes, the two Admirals here opposed to each other, were antagonists well matched, both for skill and intrepidity. In the period between February, 1782, and June, 1783, no less than five pitched battles were fought between them. In these their force was very nearly equal, with only a slight superiority on most occasions on the side of the French.* But in none of these was any decisive advantage gained by either party. The English might constantly prefer a slight and nominal claim to the honours of the day; yet, in truth, these honours belonged to all the brave men who were here contending. No ship of war was captured; no overwhelming loss of men was achieved; and, in turning to the best account the results of every action, De Suffren showed a far superior skill, especially in the retaking Trincomalee and the relieving Cuddalore.

* Thus, in the second action (April, 1782), "the English "line consisted of eleven ships, carrying 732 guns, and the "French of twelve, carrying 770." In the third action, however (July, 1782), the English ships were eleven, and the French eleven also; the English guns 732, and the French 706. (Wilks's South of India, vol. ii. p. 383. and 395.)

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The arrival of the French auxiliaries to the forces of Mysore was, in a great measure, counterbalanced by the peace which at this time Hastings concluded with the Mahratta states. Thus, the English could continue to wage, on no unequal terms, the war in the Carnatic until, in December, 1782, it received a new turn from the illness and death of Hyder Ali. This event was concealed as long as possible, to afford time for Tippoo, who was then upon the coast of Malabar, to return and claim in person the allegiance of the people and the troops. But when the intelligence did at last reach Calcutta, it fired anew the energies of Sir Eyre Coote. Weak health had compelled the failing veteran, after one more battle with Hyder at Arnee, to withdraw from the field in the Carnatic, and sail back to his Council-chambers of Bengal. Now, however, he felt, or he fancied, his strength in some degree restored; and he was eager to measure swords against the new Sultan. For this purpose he embarked in an armed vessel which carried out supplies of money to Madras. This, towards the close of its voyage, was chased for two days and two nights by some French ships of the line. During all this time the General's anxiety kept him constantly on deck. The excessive heat by day, the unwholesome dews at night, wrought sad havoc on his already wasted frame; and thus, although the ship with its pecuniary treasure escaped from its pursuers, its most precious freight could not be permanently saved. Sir Eyre Coote

expired in April, 1783, only two days after he had landed at Madras.

Tippoo during this time had returned to the coast of Malabar. There he had to wage war against General Mathews and a body of troops from Bombay set free by the peace with the Mahrattas. The English General at first had great successes, reducing both Bednore and Mangalore. But the appearance of the Sultan at the head of 50,000 men changed the scene. Mathews was besieged in Bednore and taken prisoner with all his Europeans. Being accused, though unjustly, of a breach of faith, he was put in irons, and sent in the strictest duresse with many of his comrades to Seringapatam, there to perish in the dungeons of the tyrant.

At Madras the command of the forces, in the absence of Sir Eyre, had devolved, though far less adequately, on General Stuart. That officer, in the spring of 1783, commenced operations against the French in Cuddalore, who had lately received from Europe some considerable reinforcements under M. de Bussy. The lines in front of the town, which Bussy had well fortified, and which he no less valiantly defended, were assailed by Stuart with more of intrepidity than skill. The fleets also, on both sides, hastened to the scene of action; and at the close of June some decisive engagements were expected, both by sea and land, when suddenly the tidings came that the preliminaries of peace between France and England had been signed

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at Versailles. By that compact Pondicherry and the other settlements of France in India, as they stood before the war, were to be restored. The French took possession accordingly, but, on the other hand, they recalled their detachment serving under Tippoo in Malabar, and prepared to sail back with their armament to France.

Tippoo then remained alone. He had set his heart on adding lustre to his arms by reducing in person the stronghold of Mangalore, but, having achieved that object in the autumn of 1783, he was no longer disinclined to treat with the English upon the footing of a mutual restitution of all conquests made since the commencement of the war. Thus was peace restored through all the wide extent of India, and thus did the administration of Hastings, which endured until the spring of 1785, close, after all its storms, with scarce a cloud upon its sky.

Glancing back for a moment to the rise and progress of our Eastern empire, from the first victory of Clive till the final retirement of Hastings, we must feel that it was stained by several acts that we have reason to deplore. The true foundation, or at least the true security, of our just and beneficent rule in India was that system of double government which the genius of Mr. Pitt devised. With every drawback however, it may be said, and not merely of the later period, that the sway even of the worst of the foreign governors was better than the sway even of the best of the native princes.

The people of Hindostan might sometimes see a neighbouring tribe, like the Rohillas, assailed by the English without any show of right; they might sometimes see one of their own chiefs foully dealt with or despoiled, as was the case with Omichund; yet still they felt that, among themselves, the poor man was protected from harm. They had no longer to fear the annual inroads of the Mahratta horsemen through the teeming rice-fields of Bengal. They had no longer to fear that even those handfuls of rice which the enemy had spared might be snatched from them by the first man in office who passed along—by any minion, however base, of their own Sultan or Soubahdar. Viewing these things, they were disposed to regard the great English chiefs with gratitude, as most mild and equitable rulers. While in England, Clive and Hastings were commonly railed against as tyrants, in India they were commonly extolled as benefactors. Already was there growing up in the Indian people that feeling—far more fully unfolded at the present period—that feeling on which the permanence of our Eastern empire, if permanent it be, must mainly rest—that feeling which, to give one homely instance of it, led two villagers, when they did not deem a stranger nigh them, thus to commune with each other. "A good rain this for the bread," said the one. "Yes," was the answer, "and a good "government, under which a man may eat bread "in safety!" *

* Conversation overheard by Archdeacon Corrie. See Bishop Heber's Journal, vol. ii. p. 33. ed. 1828.

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The future destinies of India, so far as human eye can scan them, are all surely fraught with the fairest hopes. Everywhere in that country has Victory crowned our arms. The last of our rivals on the Sutlege has utterly succumbed before us. Yet our security from the perils of war has in no degree, as I conceive, made us neglectful of the arts of peace. The desire to do our duty by that high and solemn trust has never yet been so earnestly felt amongst us; it pervades, it animates, all parties in the country. Taught by gradual experience, our system of government has been improved, and is still improving. High ability is trained both at Addiscombe and Haileybury for the objects both of administration and defence. In India lines of Railway are beginning to span the boundless plains. The great want of the country and the climate, Irrigation, a want too long unheeded by the English rulers, has at length attracted their anxious care. With cultivation thus quickened by our wealth, and directed by our skill, we may trust that, in another age, the supplies of Tea within our own dominions may be such as to rival, perhaps even to supersede, the produce of the provinces of China. We may trust that the supply of Cotton for our looms may become the largest from that region which gave to Cotton its first name in the western world.* Above all, we may

* "Superior pars Egypti, in Arabiam vergens, gignit fruti-
"cem quem aliqui Gossipium vocant, plures *Xylon*, et ideo lina
"inde acta *Xylina*. Parvus est, similemque barbatæ nucis

indulge a well-grounded confidence that advancement in knowledge and in morals may here keep pace with the progress of prosperity, and that as the fouler Hindoo superstitions already pale before the growing light of day, so that God, in His own good time, and in the measure of His own appointed Revelation, may, even to this long-benighted people, make Himself clearly and fully known.

" defert fructum," &c. (Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xix. c. i.) On this passage Colonel Wilks observes : "The term *Xylon* was " certainly not derived from the Arabs, who name the plant " *Kuttun* (cotton), but it bears a close resemblance to the com- " mon Indian pronunciation of Ceylon ; as muslin from Moosul " and calico from Calicut, the emporia from which these sub- " stances became known in the west." (South of India, vol. iii. p. 20.)

CHAPTER LXX.

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With some new classes of critics, or of those who claim to be so, it has grown a common reproach against the historian of almost every period, that while dwelling at full length on battles and on sieges, on cabals and state-intrigues, on nobles and on princes, he lightly glides over the true condition, —the habits and the feelings,—of the people. But they who thus complain have perhaps considered rather the importance of the subject than the scantiness of the materials. While the deeds of a fleet or army, of a Sovereign or Senate, are graven on brass and marble, or chronicled in records and rolls, the customs and pursuits of private life and the course of every-day affairs, being deemed too slight for commemoration in their own age, for the most part elude the discernment of the next. During the darker ages scarce any means exist to fill the void. Even within the last two centuries the means are very far from adequate. Nor are these in any measure obvious and easy to the learner. They cannot, like the narrative of wars or treaties,

be deduced from any continuous chain of documents; but must be, where they can be, gleaned from a thousand scattered hints. For their sake we must explore the gloomy secrets of the scaffold and the prison-vault; for their sake we must gather far and wide the gossip of familiar correspondence, the entries of journals and account books, or the occasional allusions in novels, plays, and songs. And even with regard to these last, though giving us what nothing else supplies, they must not be implicitly received; on the contrary, the utmost caution and reserve are needed, lest we mistake the caricature for the portrait, and the exception for the rule.

On comparing the Great Britain of the last century with the Great Britain of the present day, the change is nowhere more apparent than in the ease and speed of travelling, and the consequent increase of travellers. Of this the steam-engine is of course the principal cause; but it should be noted, that personal security likewise is a plant of later growth. Only three summers since, a French gentleman in the Highlands was gazing with some surprise at the tranquil and orderly scenes around him, and saying that his friends at Paris had advised him to come upon his journey well provided with pistol and sword, since, as they bid him bear in mind, "you are going to the country of "Rob Roy!" We can scarce blame these Parisians for so faithfully remembering that little more than a hundred years ago Rob Roy was able to levy his

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"black mail" on all who came beneath the shadow of his mountains. But they might at least with equal reason have applied the same advice to England; for much less than a hundred years ago, the great thoroughfares near London, and, above all, the open heaths, as Bagshot and Hounslow, were infested by robbers on horseback, who bore the name of highwaymen. Booty these men were determined by some means or other to obtain. In the reign of George the First they stuck up handbills at the gates of many known rich men in London, forbidding any one of them, on pain of death, to travel from town without a watch or with less than ten guineas of money.* Private carriages and public conveyances were alike the objects of attack. Thus, for instance, in 1775, Mr. Nuthall, the solicitor and friend of Lord Chatham, returning from Bath in his carriage with his wife and child, was stopped and fired at near Hounslow, and died of the fright. In the same year the guard of the Norwich stage (a man of different metal from the lawyer) was killed in Epping Forest, after he had himself shot dead three highwaymen out of seven that assailed him.† Let it not be supposed, that such examples were but few and far between; they might from the records of that time be numbered by the score; although in most cases the loss was rather of property than life. These

* Lettres d'un Français (en Angleterre), vol. iii. p. 211. ed. 1745.

† Ann. Regist. 1775. pp. 97. and 182.

outrages appear to have increased in frequency towards the close of the American War. Horace Walpole, writing from Strawberry Hill at that time, complains that, having lived there in quiet for thirty years, he cannot now stir a mile from his own house after sunset, without one or two servants armed with blunderbusses.* Some men of rank at that period —Earl Berkeley, above all — were famed for their skill and courage in dealing with such assailants. One day — so runs the story — Lord Berkeley, travelling after dark on Hounslow Heath, was wakened from a slumber by a strange face at his carriage-window and a loaded pistol at his breast. "I have you now, my Lord," said the intruder, "after all your boasts, as I hear, that you "would never let yourself be robbed!" — "Nor "would I now," said Lord Berkeley, putting his hand into his pocket, as though to draw forth his purse, "but for that other fellow peeping over "your shoulder." The highwayman hastily turned round to look at this unexpected intruder, when the Earl, pulling out instead of a purse a pistol, shot him dead upon the spot.

It is strange that so highly civilised a people should have endured these highway robberies so long. In this respect we scarcely seemed above the level of the modern Romans. But stranger still, perhaps, to find some of the best writers of the last century treat them as subjects of jest, and almost as subjects of praise. From such produc-

* To the Earl of Strafford, Oct. 3. 1782.

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tions as the "Tom Clinch" of Swift, or the "Beggars' Opera" of Gay, we may collect that it was the tone in certain circles to depict the highwaymen as daring and generous spirits, who "took to "the road," as it was termed, under the pressure of some momentary difficulties, — the gentle-folk, as it were, of the profession, and far above the common run of thieves.*

A highly intelligent traveller, towards the year 1770, has described a great number of our country inns, and upon the whole in favourable terms.† There might be comfort in many a wayside cottage such as Izaac Walton speaks of, neat and trim, with its rosemary-strewn sheets, its dish of new-caught trout, and its ballads on the walls. There might be splendour in some few houses, as "The Castle" at Marlborough, along the great Bath road, and other lines of daily and luxurious thoroughfare. Even in those of humble pretensions there was seldom wanting a secret bin, from the dust and cobwebs of which the landlord could draw upon occasion a bottle of excellent Bordeaux. Travellers of rank were frequently expected to

* Some of these worthies appear to have enjoyed a kind of traditionary fame; above all, "the bold Turpin," who was hanged at York for horse-stealing, in 1739. See his Life in the Newgate Calendars of Mr. William Jackson (vol. ii. pp. 331—349.) Many of them showed great pride in their own achievements. "Not know me!" said John Rann to the tollman on the Tottenham Road, "why I am Sixteen-string Jack, the fa-"mous highwayman!" (Ibid. vol. v. p. 142.)

† See the Northern Tour, by Arthur Young, vol. iv. pp. 586—594.

call for such even when they had no need of it; "for the good," — as the phrase went — "of the "house." But the dinner was seldom equal to the wine, and the charges were often exorbitantly high. When, in 1763, the Duke de Nivernois, the new ambassador from France, landed at Dover, he was astonished at the charges in his bill. This was no new matter of complaint. So early as 1619 we find Lord Herbert of Cherbury say: "At Calais, I remember, my cheer was twice as "good as at Dover, and my reckoning half as "cheap."*

Besides the slowness, the risk, and the cost of travelling, which might tend to diminish the journeys to London in that age, the country gentlemen were also in some measure kept away by their estrangement from the two first princes of the House of Hanover. Not a few who had been loyal subjects of Queen Anne disliked the reign of her German cousins, and began to cast a wistful look towards her nearer kindred beyond the sea. Without partaking, or desiring to partake, the Jacobite designs, they would at least, while giving in due form, "the King," as their first toast after dinner, make a motion with the glass to pass it on the other side of the water-decanter which stood before them, and imply or speak the words, "over the "water." They would revile all adherents of the Court as "a parcel of Roundheads and Hanover

* Life of Lord Herbert of Cherbury, p. 131. ed. 1770.

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"Rats."* Roundhead, as is well known, was the by-word first applied to the Calvinistic preachers in the Civil Wars, from the close-cropped hair which they affected as distinguished from the flowing curls of the Cavaliers. The second phrase was of far more recent origin. It so chanced that not long after the accession of the House of Hanover, some of the brown, that is the German or Norway rats, were first brought over to this country (in some timber as is said); and being much stronger than the black, or till then the common rats, they in many places quite extirpated the latter.† The word (both the noun and the verb to rat) was first, as we have seen, levelled at the converts to the government of George the First, but has by degrees obtained a wider meaning and come to be applied to any sudden and mercenary change in politics.

While we may reject in all the more essential features such gross caricatures as those of Squire Western and Parson Trulliber, we yet cannot deny that many both of the country gentlemen and clergy in that age showed signs of a much neglected education. For this both our Universities, but Ox-

* This was the phrase of Squire Western (*Tom Jones*, book v. c. 14.). See the ceremony of the water-decanter described in *Redgauntlet*, letter iv.

† See Pennant's British Zoology, vol. i. p. 115. ed. 1776. Though the brown species bears with us the name of the Norway Rat, Mr. Pennant assures us that "it is an animal "quite unknown in Scandinavia." — Rats of any kind were, it appears, first brought to America by a ship from Antwerp.

ford principally, must be blamed. "I have heard," says Dr. Swift, "more than one or two persons of "high rank declare they could learn nothing more "at Oxford and Cambridge than to drink ale and "smoke tobacco; wherein I firmly believed them, "and could have added some hundred examples "from my own observations in one of these Uni-"versities,"—meaning that of Oxford.* At Cambridge such men as Professor Saunderson had kept up the flame, worthily maintaining her high mathematical renown. But even there it is plain, from the letters of Gray, how little taste for poetry and literature lingered in her ancient halls. Oxford, on the other hand, so justly famed both before that age and after it, had then sunk down to the lowest pitch of dullness and neglect. Gibbon tells us of his tutor at Magdalen College, that this gentleman well remembered he had a salary to receive, and only forgot he had a duty to perform. The future historian was never once summoned to attend even the ceremony of a lecture, and in the course of one winter might make unreproved, in the midst of term, a tour to Bath, a visit into Buckinghamshire, and a few excursions to London.† We may incline to suspect the testimony of the sceptic against any place of Christian education, but we shall find it (allowing only for the

* Essay on Modern Education, Works, vol. ix. p. 373. ed. 1814. The Dean, however, afterwards limits his remark to "young heirs sent thither only for form."

† "Memoirs of my Life," p. 70. 4. 1839. Dean Milman,

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superior license of every Gentleman Commoner), confirmed in its full extent by so excellent and so eminent a member of our Church as Dr. Johnson. Here is his own account of his outset at Pembroke College. "The first day after I came I "waited on my tutor Mr. Jordan, and then stayed "away four. On the sixth Mr. Jordan asked me "why I had not attended. I answered, I had "been sliding in Christ Church meadow."* This apology appears to have been given without the least compunction, and received without the least reproof.

It is painful to read such charges against an University so rich in her foundations, so historic in her fame, and standing once more so high in the respect of those who have been trained within her walls. But the case is even worse, if possible, when we come to her system of Degrees. In granting these, the Laudian Statutes still in name and theory prevailed. But in practice there appeared a degree of laxity which, were the subject less important, would be wholly ludicrous. Lord Eldon, then Mr. John Scott of University College, and who passed the Schools in February, 1770, gave the following account of them: "An "examination for a Degree at Oxford was in my

himself for many years a Professor at Oxford, adds in a note (p. 86.), that, from the best authority, he has understood Gibbon's observations to have been at that time by no means exaggerated.

* Life of Boswell, ch. iii.

"time a farce. I was examined in Hebrew, and "in History. 'What is the Hebrew for the place "'of a skull?' I replied, 'Golgotha.' 'Who "'founded University College?' I stated (though, "by the way, the point is sometimes doubted), that "King Alfred founded it. 'Very well, Sir,' said "the Examiner, 'you are competent for your De-"'gree!'" * Similar to this is the description in 1780 by the Rev. Vicesimus Knox: "The Mas-"ters take a most solemn oath that they will ex-"amine properly and impartially. Dreadful as all "this appears, there is always found to be more "of appearance in it than reality, for the great-"est dunce usually gets his TESTIMONIUM signed "with as much ease and credit as the finest genius. "..... The Statutes require that he should "translate familiar English phrases into Latin. "And now is the time when the Masters show "their wit and jocularity. I have known the "questions on this occasion to consist of an in-"quiry into the pedigree of a race-horse!"† The Commissioners of 1850, who quote these testimonies, add, that at the time in question the Examiners were chosen by the candidate himself from among his friends, and that he was expected to provide a dinner for them after the examination was over. Oaths upon this subject, as upon most others, proved to be no safeguard. Oaths at Oxford were habitually taken because the law required

* Twiss's Life of Lord Eldon, vol. i. p. 57.

† Works of Dr. V. Knox, vol. i. p. 377.

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them, and habitually disregarded, because their fulfilment had become impossible in some cases, and inconvenient in many more.

From this ignominious state the studies of the University were not rescued till the commencement of the present century. In 1800 a new Statute was passed, chiefly, it is said, at the instance of Dr. Eveleigh, Provost of Oriel*, which reformed the whole system of Examination, and awarded honours to the ablest candidates. By another Statute, in 1807, a further great improvement was effected. A division then was made between the Classical and the Mathematical Schools, and the first who attained the highest rank in each was a future Prime Minister, — Sir Robert Peel.

The last century at Oxford was indeed as a valley between hills. Look either at the age which preceded, or at the age which followed it, and own their intellectual elevation. At either of those periods a traveller from London might, as he left the uplands, and crossed the Cherwell bridge, have wandered through the proud array before him of pinnacles and battlements, — from where spread the cloisters of Magdalen, and the groves that bear Addison's name—to the books and the galleries of the Bodleian, to that unequalled chapel of New College, or to that noble bequest of Wolsey, the wide quadrangle of Christ Church, — and all the way met nothing that misbecame

* Report of the Oxford University Commission, p. 60. ed. 1852.

the Genius of the Place — nothing to clash with the lofty and reverent thoughts which it suggested. He would have seen many men of eminent learning and high spirit, men not unworthy of the scenes in which they dwelt, men not misplaced among the high-wrought works of Art, or the storehouses of ancient knowledge, — the foundations of Saints, and the monuments of Martyrs. There, in the reign of Charles the First, he might have seen the Heads and Fellows cheerfully melt their plate or pour down their money for the service of their Royal Master, — willing to dare deprivation and poverty, — willing to go forth unfriended into exile, rather than bate one jot of their dutiful allegiance both to Church and King. There, in the reign of James the Second, he might have seen those cloisters of Magdalen the last and the firmest citadel of freedom. Or, if the lot of the traveller whom we suppose had been cast on these later days, if he had visited Oxford under the Fourth George, or the Fourth William, he would then, amidst some indefensible abuses, have found much, very much, to admire and commend. He would have found most indefatigable Tutors, most searching Examinations, most hard-fought Honours. He would have found on all sides a true and growing zeal for the reputation and well-being of the place. But in the middle of the last century there were none of these things. The old spirit had sunk, and the new not yet arisen.

The general contempt into which Oxford had

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fallen in the middle of the last century is further indicated by a lively touch of satire in Lord Chesterfield's Essays. The writer assumes it as quite impossible, that any person well acquainted with that University could desire it to become the place of education of his children. Speaking in the character of a country gentleman he says, "When I "took my son away from school, I resolved to "send him directly abroad, having been at Oxford "myself!" *

The remissness of the tutors at Oxford and at Cambridge led, of course, to other neglects of duty in those whom they had failed to teach. Such neglects were only too apparent in the Church of England of that age. Let us hear upon them a wholly unexceptionable witness — Dr. Thomas Newton, Bishop of Bristol, who died in 1782. In his Account of his own life this Prelate states, that by living and residing so much at Bristol he had hoped that his example would have induced the other members of the Church to perform their part also, and fulfil, at least, their Statutable duties.

* Essay in "The World," May 3. 1753. In 1746 a poet describes as follows the reminiscences of a country clergyman, while yet an Oxford Fellow: —

"When calm around the common room
"I puff'd my daily pipe's perfume,
"Rode for a stomach and inspected
"At annual bottlings corks selected,
"And din'd untax'd, untroubled, under
"The portrait of our pious Founder!"

See the "Progress of Discontent," in Dodsley's Collection of Poems, vol. iv. p. 257. ed. 1755.

The Deanery, he states, was worth at least 500*l.* a year, and each Prebend about half that sum; and for these preferments the residence then usually required was three months for the Dean and half that time for each Prebendary. "But alas!" continues the worthy Prelate, "never was Church "more shamefully neglected. The Bishop has "several times been there for months together "without seeing the face of Dean or Prebendary, "or anything better than a Minor Canon." And as, in some cases, there were undisguised neglects of duty, so in others we may trace its jocular evasion. We may learn, on the same Episcopal authority, that the Church of Rochester was in no less ill plight than the Church of Bristol; and that on one of the Prebendaries dining with Bishop Pearce, the Bishop had asked him: "Pray, Dr. S., what is "your time of residence at Rochester?" — "My "Lord," said he, "I reside there the better part "of the year." — "I am very glad to hear it," replied the good Bishop. But the Doctor's meaning and also the real fact was, that he resided at Rochester only during the week of the Audit! *

Among the laity, as might have been expected, a corresponding neglect of Church ordinances was too often found. Bishop Newton cites it as a most signal and unusual instance of religious duty, that Mr. George Grenville "regularly attended the ser-"vice of the Church every Sunday morning, even

* Account of his own Life, by Bishop Newton; Works, vol. i. p. 126. ed. 1787.

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"while he was in the highest offices." Not only was Sunday the common day for Cabinet Councils and Cabinet dinners, but the very hours of its morning service were frequently appointed for political interviews and conferences.* It is gratifying to reflect, how clear and constant since that time has been the improvement on such points. The Lord Lieutenant, and for very many former years the representative, of one of the Midland shires, has told me that when he came of age there were only two landed gentlemen in his county who had family prayers, whilst at present, as he believes, there are scarcely two that have not.

We may also observe with pleasure, that many as were the neglects and shortcomings of the Clergy in that age, their lives, at least, were pure. No charge of immorality can, with justice, be brought against them, unless in such few and rare cases as in any very numerous body must, of course, in time arise.

The Dissenters of that age, or some of them, might have more zeal, but had even less of learning. In some cases we find their deficiencies acknowledged by themselves. Here is one entry from the Minutes of the Methodist Conference, in May, 1765. "Do not our people in general talk too "much, and read too little? They do."

To the neglect of education in that age we may

* See for example the Chatham Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 337.; and Franklin's Works, vol. v. p. 48.

also in part ascribe the prevalence of drinking and gaming. It is remarkable how widely the former extended, notwithstanding the high prices of wine. Swift notes in his account-book, that going with a friend to a London tavern, they paid sixteen shillings for two bottles of "Portugal and Florence."* Instances of gross intemperance were certainly in that age not rare. Lord Eldon assured me, that he had seen at Oxford a Doctor of Divinity whom he knew, so far the worse for a convivial entertainment, that he was unable to walk home without leaning for support with his hand upon the walls; but having, by some accident, staggered to the rotunda of the Radcliffe Library, which was not as yet protected by a railing, he continued to go round and round, wondering at the unwonted length of the street, but still revolving, and supposing he went straight, until some friend—perhaps the future Chancellor himself—relieved him from his embarrassment, and set him on his way. Even where there might be no positive excess, the best company of that day would devote a long time to the circulation of the bottle. In Scotland, where habits of hard-drinking were still far more rife than in England, the principal landed gentlemen, some eighty years ago, dined for the most part at four o'clock, and did not quit the dining-room nor rejoin the ladies till ten or eleven. Sometimes, as among the Edinburgh magnates, there might be a flow of bright conviviality and wit, but in most

* Journal to Stella, October 8, 1710.

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cases nothing could well be duller than these topers. There is named a Lowland gentleman of large estate, and well remembered in Whig circles, who used to say that, as he thought, "the great bane "of all society is conversation!" The same hard-drinking tendency in Scotland may be traced in another fact,—that while any young man of gentle blood was deemed to lose caste if he engaged in trade, an exception by common consent was made for the congenial business of a wine merchant.

Gaming was abhorred by George the Second no less than by George the Third.* But, in spite of the Royal discountenance, it flourished through the whole period comprised in the present History. There is one case recorded of a lady who lost three thousand guineas at one sitting at Loo.† Among the men, Brookes' Club, and White's are mentioned, as more especially the seats of high play. Mr. Wilberforce, coming up to London as a young man of fortune, has related the endeavours that were used to engage him at a Faro-table in the former, where George Selwyn kept bank. And, he adds, "The very first time I "went to Boodle's I won twenty-five guineas of "the Duke of Norfolk."‡ Many in that age were the ancestral forests felled, and the goodly lands disposed of to gratify this passion — scarcely less

* Letter of Lord Chesterfield to his son, June 26. 1752, *ad finem.*

† Ann. Register, 1766, p. 61.

‡ Life of Wilberforce, by his Sons, vol. i. p. 16.

than in the days of Charles the Second, when the King himself would hold the dice-box, and when Lord Carnarvon used to say that wood was an excrescence of the earth provided by Nature for the payment of debts!* But, although the high play continued, the games were wholly changed. Thus, the terms in Ombre and Bassette, which Pope in his "Rape of the Lock," and Lady Mary Wortley in her "Town Eclogues," assume as quite familiar, became by degrees almost unintelligible. The discovery of a new game in the last years of the American War tended greatly to diffuse the spirit of gaming from the higher to the lower classes. This was the E. O. table, which was thought to be beyond the reach of law, because not distinctly specified in any Statute. In 1782 a Bill was brought in, providing severe penalties against this or any other new games of chance; and the Bill, after some debate, passed the Commons, but in the Lords was lost, owing to the lateness of the Session and the pressure of business at Lord Rockingham's death.† In the debates upon this subject, Mr. Byng, as Member for Middlesex, stated, that in two parishes only of Westminster there were 296 E. O. tables, and that he knew of instances where bankrupts had gained 20,000*l.* by E. O. Another Member added, that at least 500 other

* See Pepys's Diary, May 5. 1667.

† Lords' Journals, July, 1782. The Bill with the Lords was three times in Committee, on July 6. 8. and 9., and several amendments had been made, but the Session was closed on the 11th.

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tables were upon the stocks, and that E. O. tables might now be found at almost every country town. Servants and apprentices, it seems, were drawn in to take part in these games, cards of direction to them being often thrown down the areas of the houses; and the comers in were allowed to play on Sundays as freely as on other days.*

Sheridan, who, from his own private life, could not be expected to view the new Bill with any great favour, said against it, with some truth, that "it would be in vain to prohibit E. O. tables "while a more pernicious mode of gaming was "countenanced by law — he meant the gaming in "the lottery." Private lotteries were indeed prohibited, but State lotteries had long been ranked among our sources of revenue. In 1763, two lotteries were for the first time established in one year. In 1788 Mr. Pitt estimated the clear annual gains which they brought to Government at no less than 260,000*l.*; such, he said, was the rage and madness for this species of gambling, and such the bargain which, on competition among several bidders, he had made. This "lottery madness" as it has been truly termed, was it seems indulged in by night as well as by day. A traveller to London in 1775 observes that he could not help looking with displeasure at the number of paper lanthorns that dangled before the doors of lottery offices, considering them as so many false lights hung out

* See the Parl. Hist. vol. xxiii. p. 110—113.; and Miss Edgeworth's *Belinda*, ch. xxviii.

to draw fools to their destruction.* Moreover, the mode of deciding the lottery prizes in that age seemed as though expressly designed to favour gambling speculation, and came to be prohibited long before the lotteries themselves had ceased. A certain number of tickets was drawn and declared each day, so that, according to the proportion drawn and to the prizes left behind, the price of the remaining tickets was enhanced. So common and well-known was this practice, that it might afford an illustration to the moralist and preacher. "At the close of the lottery of life"—thus to Pope writes Bishop Atterbury—"our last minutes, "like tickets left in the wheel, rise in their valu- "ation." †

Besides such ill practices as drinking and gaming, we may further ascribe to that age not merely a more frequent breach of moral obligations, but also, even where no fault of conduct is imputed, a want of moral refinement. We may guess the customary nature of the talk or the songs after dinner, when we find that, in great houses, the Chaplain was expected to retire with the ladies. But in many cases we find this want of moral refinement extend even to the other sex. Of this a strong instance is afforded in a letter, hitherto unpublished, from a great politician and party-leader, William Pul-

* Ann. Regist. 1775, part ii. p. 189.

† Letter dated November 23. 1731. This passage may be compared with the beautiful moral illustration drawn by Addison from an abstruse point in mathematics—the *Asymptotes*. See the Spectator, No. cxi.

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teney, at that time Earl of Bath. Writing to his relative Colman, who had begun to practise as a Barrister, Lord Bath, whether in jest or earnest, alludes as follows to his own family circle:—"This "letter I direct to you at Shrewsbury (on Circuit), "which is the nearest place to find you in. If you "are concerned in the trial of any rape, the ladies "desire you would send a minute particular account "of all that passed in it."* Another strong proof of the same conclusion may be gathered from the correspondence of Sir Walter Scott. His grand-aunt, Mrs. Keith of Ravelstone, a lady then far advanced in life, applied to him in his younger years to obtain for her perusal the novels of Mrs. Afra Behn—some of the most licentious in the language. Scott, though not without some qualms, complied with the request. The peccant volumes were, however, most speedily returned. "Take back your bonny Mrs. Behn," said Mrs. Keith, "and if you will fol- "low my advice, put her in the fire. But is it not "a strange thing," she added, "that I, a woman of "eighty, sitting alone, feel myself ashamed to look "through a book which, sixty years ago, I have "heard read aloud for the amusement of large "circles of the best company in London?"†

By the course of novels and romances we may indeed measure, in some degree, the advance of

* MS. letter March 23. 1759. Original in Brit. Mus. purchased 1852.

† Letter from Sir Walter Scott to Lady Louisa Stuart, 1821. Life by Lockhart, vol. v. p. 136. first ed.

moral refinement in our countrywomen. Fielding, whose masterpiece, Tom Jones, appeared in 1749, though far less licentious than Mrs. Behn, is far more so than the present taste approves. The same remark applies both to Smollett and to Sterne. Smollett — his Roderick Random came forth in 1748, and his Peregrine Pickle in 1751,—and Sterne —his Tristram Shandy dates from 1759—must be acknowledged to have, the former many passages of free description, and the last a long train of covert hints. But at the same period as Tom Jones there appeared another work of fiction that aimed at a much higher strain. In that very year, 1749, came forth the first volumes of Clarissa Harlowe. The author, Richardson, was already known by his Pamela a few years before, and was further distinguished by his Sir Charles Grandison a few years afterwards. Whatever his theme, the delineator of Clarissa seldom wrote without some moral lesson in his view. And while Fielding, with admirable skill, portrayed the especial features of the English character, Richardson no less successfully applied himself to the inmost feelings and failings of the human heart as in all countries they exist. For that very reason, while we find Fielding but seldom relished out of England, Richardson has perhaps obtained even more of value and esteem in translations, or upon the Continent, than at home. It is striking, by the way, to read of the contempt which these two great masters of fiction, each so eminent in his own sphere, entertained at heart for

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each other. Richardson would speak of Fielding, even to Fielding's sister, as utterly low and vulgar, while Fielding thought Richardson both pedantic and prolix. From the latter charge, indeed, it is no easy matter to defend him. A lady of the Edinburgh circle, who loved, in her old age, to have novels read to her as she sat in her elbow-chair, used to prefer, for that purpose, Sir Charles Grandison beyond any other work of fiction, "be-"cause," said she, "should I drop asleep in the "course of the reading, I am sure when I awake "I shall have lost none of the story, but shall find "the party where I left them, conversing in the "cedar-parlour!"

The wavering taste of the public in the matter of such liberties as Fielding's, was finally turned against them by other eminent examples. Three most remarkable works of fiction were composed in 1759, in 1763, and in 1765; the one a philosophical essay in the garb of an Eastern tale; the second, a delightful picture of rural life in England; the third, the parent of a numerous brood, the earliest of what we may term Romances, as distinguished from Novels. To this description it is needless to add the names of Rasselas, the Vicar of Wakefield, and the Castle of Otranto. Differing as do these tales from each other—differing as did their authors, Johnson, Goldsmith, and Horace Walpole—they yet agree in this one point, that there is nothing in them by which the most shrinking delicacy could be wounded. The contrast of

Miss Burney's style with that of Fielding, though more recent, was stronger still, because the subjects on which she dwelt were more nearly the same as Fielding's. Miss Burney, whose Evelina appeared in 1778, and was followed by Cecilia in 1782, was the first to show that scenes both of low life and of high might be delineated with lively skill, and in a vein of broad comic humour, without even a single line unfit to meet a young lady's eye, or unworthy to proceed from a young lady's hand.*

Although in the last century the common level of female education was undoubtedly less high than now, there seems some ground to conjecture that then a greater number of ladies studied the dead languages. We may picture to ourselves, as an instance, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in her girlhood, seated in "the little parlour" which she has described at Thoresby, and with the old oaks of the forest full in view, but relinquishing a summer stroll beneath them to con over the Latin version of Epictetus, and to render it in English, while Bishop Burnet, by her side, smiled on her young endeavours, and directed them. Yet her learning never caused Lady Mary to contemn the pursuits more especially allotted to her sex; on the contrary, we find her say, in one of her later letters, while treating of her granddaughter's education, "I think it as scandalous for a woman not

* See the excellent concluding remarks of Mr. Macaulay, in his Essay upon Madame d'Arblay (Edinburgh Review, No. cliv. p. 569.).

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"to know how to use a needle, as for a man not to "know how to use a sword." *

It may be worthy of note, that in the earlier part of the last century, a young lady whose education was completed was addressed in the same form as if already married. As she was a "spinster" by law, so was she a "mistress" by courtesy. Thus, for example, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu directs her letters for the maiden sister of her husband, to Mrs. instead of Miss, Wortley. This peculiarity is the more remarkable, since, at a shortly previous period, the very opposite, at least among certain classes, prevailed in France. As an instance, we may observe, in the "Impromptu de Versailles," that the wife of the greatest genius for comedy of modern times, bore the title, not of Madame, but of Mademoiselle, Molière.

A greater contrast can scarcely be conceived than between the dresses of the present day and those in vogue a hundred or a hundred and fifty years ago. Even with the aid of Kneller's pictures we can scarcely bring to our mind's eye our grandmothers in their hoops and hair-powder, or our grandfathers with their huge periwigs and their clumsy shoes, with buckles at their feet and at their

* To the Countess of Bute, January 28. 1753. A Spanish proverb (preserved in the collection of Cesar Oudin, 1624), is by no means favourable to those ladies who study the language of Cicero and Virgil: —

"Mula que haze *hin hin*
"Y muguer que habla Latin
"Nunca hizieron buen fin."

knees, with rich velvet for their morning attire, and always with a sword at their side. A gold snuff-box took the present place of a cigar-case, and a gold-headed cane the present place of a switch. So high were the heels then commonly worn, that Governor Pitt was enabled, in travelling, to conceal in a cavity which he had formed in one of them the great diamond which he had brought from the East Indies. Towards the time of the American War the ladies adopted a new and strange head-dress, building up their hair into a most lofty tower or pinnacle, until the head, with its adjuncts, came to be almost a fourth of the whole figure. Several varieties of this extravagant fashion may be traced in the engravings of that day. "I have just had "my hair dressed," writes Miss Burney's Evelina. "You cannot think how oddly my head feels; full "of powder and black pins, and a great cushion "on the top of it!" Towards the time, however, of the Peace of 1783, there began to spread among both sexes a taste for greater plainness and simplicity of attire. This taste, like most others on this subject, appears to have come from France, and to have proceeded, in some degree, from the precept and example of Rousseau. * But America also, it is said, gave an impulse in the same direction. Wraxall—for his authority, though slight,

* Besides sundry passages in the *Emile* see the *Nouvelle Heloise*, part ii. lett. xxi. As against a dress too costly, and for that very reason the longer worn, how effective is the single line: "Je n'aime ni galons ni taches!"

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may suffice for such matters as these—complains, towards the year 1781, that Mr. Fox, who in early youth paid great attention to his dress, had grown wholly to neglect it. "He constantly, or "at least usually, wore in the House of Commons, "a blue frock coat and a buff waistcoat, neither "of which seemed, in general, new, and both "sometimes appeared to be thread-bare. Nor "ought it to be forgotten that these colours then "constituted the distinguishing badge or uniform "of Washington and the American insurgents." * Yet here I cannot but suspect some misrepresentation of the motive. It is hard to believe, even of the most vehement days of party-spirit, that any Englishman could avowedly assume, in the House of Commons, the colours of those who, even though on the most righteous grounds, bore arms against England; and I should be willing to take in preference any other explanation that can be plausibly alleged.

By the influence, then, in some measure perhaps of both America and France, velvet coats and embroidered stomachers were, by degrees, relinquished. Swords were no longer invariably worn by every one who claimed to be of gentle birth or breeding. They were first reserved for evening

* "Memoirs of my own Time," vol. ii. p. 2. ed. 1815. See also Mackenzie's Essay in the *Lounger*, dated April 9. 1785. Buff waistcoats were then, it seems, the usual badge of all Whig gentlemen at Edinburgh. And as for the Whig ladies, "I found that most of them wore a fox's tail by way of deco-"ration on their head-dress."

suits, and finally consigned, as at present, to Court dresses. Nevertheless, several years were needed ere this change was fully wrought. In Guy Mannering, where the author refers to the end of the American War, he observes of morning suits, that "though the custom of wearing swords by "persons out of uniform had been gradually be- "coming obsolete, it was not yet so totally for- "gotten as to occasion any particular remark "towards those who chose to adhere to it." Thus it may be difficult to fix the precise period of this change. But no one, on reflection, will deny its real importance. To wear a sword had been, until then, the distinguishing mark of a gentleman or officer. It formed a line of demarcation between these classes and the rest of the community; it implied something of deference in the last, and something of "knightliness," as Spenser terms it, in the former. Immediately after the cessation of this ancient usage, we find Burke lamenting that the age of chivalry was gone. Yet, although there was, or in theory at least there might be, some advantage in this outward sign of the feelings and the duties comprehended in the name of Gentleman, we must own that it was balanced by other evils, and especially by the greater frequency of duels it produced. Where both parties wore their swords, there was a constant temptation to draw and use them in any sudden quarrel. I may allege as a fair example the case, in 1765, of Mr. Chaworth and his country neighbour, Lord Byron,

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the grand-uncle and predecessor of the poet. These gentlemen had been dining together at the Nottinghamshire Club, which was held once a month at a tavern in Pall Mall. A discussion arose as to the comparative merits of their manors in point of game, and Mr. Chaworth was at length provoked into declaring that if it were not for Sir Charles Sedley's care and his own, Lord Byron would not have a hare on his estate. Upon this they withdrew to another room lighted by a single tallow-candle, where they drew their swords and fought, and where Mr. Chaworth was killed. Lord Byron was brought to trial before his Peers, and found guilty of Manslaughter only.*

The population of England and Wales is computed to have increased from 5,066,000 in 1710, to 7,814,000 in 1780.† Of our rising manufactures and manufacturers I have treated in another place.‡ The agriculturists within that period were far indeed behind-hand if compared to those of the present day. Scarce any great and real progress in their modes of husbandry can be traced until after the accession of George the Third, when they were no doubt much animated by the personal example and predilection of the King in his farms both at

* Howell's State Trials, vol. xix. p. 1178—1235. But a different view of Mr. Chaworth's language is given in Walpole's Memoirs, vol. ii. p. 51.

† Preface to the first volume of the Population Returns, 1831, p. 45. as derived from Mr. Finlaison's tables.

‡ See vol. v. p. 1—12.

Richmond and at Windsor. Until then the accounts from the most opposite quarters tell nearly the same tale of lands either wholly waste, or at least imperfectly tilled. Take, in the first place, the extreme northern county of Caithness. The daughter of Sir John Sinclair, in the biography which she has written of her father, states that when he first began his vigorous improvements, at the age of eighteen, and in the year 1772, the whole district round him presented a scene of most discouraging desolation. Scarce any farmer in the county owned a wheel-cart, and burdens were conveyed on the backs of women, thirty or forty of whom might be seen in a line, carrying heavy wicker-creels. "At that period," continues Miss Sinclair, "females did most of the hard work— "driving the peats or rowing the boats; and it "sometimes occurred that if a man lost a horse "or an ox, he married a wife as the cheapest plan "to make up the difference." If we come to Northumberland, we shall find it alleged by Warburton, who was Somerset Herald to George the Second, and who published his "Vallum Ro- "manum" in 1753, that "such was the wild and "barren state of this country, even at the time I "made my survey, that in those parts now called the "wastes, and heretofore the debateable grounds, I "have frequently discovered the vestiges of towns "and camps that seemed never to have been trod "upon by any human creature than myself since "the Romans abandoned them; the traces of

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"streets and the foundations of the buildings being "still visible, only grown over with grass." The prevalence of turnip-growing in the place of fallows, which, says Mr. Grey of Dilston, has made a complete revolution in the management and value of land, took place in that county within the memory of living men. No turnip ever grew on a Northumbrian field till between the years 1760 and 1770, although they had been sown and reared in gardens for several years before.* It may be said not only of Northumberland, but of all the counties which are, in fact, what it calls itself—north of Humber—that, at the accession of George the Third, they were still, in great part, uninclosed. As in 1832 I was riding with the late Earl of Harewood, at his seat near Leeds, he pointed out to me the remains of a narrow horse-bridge, with a turnpike beside it. This, he said, was, till his childhood, the sole communication between the Leeds district and the north, and that was the first toll which, on coming into England, the Scottish drovers had need to pay.

But let us pass to Lincolnshire, a county renowned perhaps beyond any other of the present day for its skilful cultivation and luxuriant crops; and let us hear certainly one of the most experienced and able of our living agriculturists. Only a few years since, Mr. Pusey, then the member for Berkshire, was engaged in a critical examination of the farming around Lincoln. As

* See the Essay by Mr. John Grey of Dilston in the Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, vol. ii. p. 151—193.

he journeyed onward, his attention was arrested by a column seventy feet high, which stood by the road-side. On inquiry from his companion, Mr. Handley, he learnt that it was a land light-house, built no longer since than the middle of the last century, as a nightly guide for travellers over the dreary waste which still retains the name of Lincoln Heath. But though the name might linger, the scene had wholly changed; the spirit and industry of the people had reared the most thriving homesteads around the column, and spread a mantle of teeming vegetation to its very base. "And it was certainly surprising to me," Mr. Pusey adds, "to discover at once the finest farming I had ever seen, and the only land light-house that was ever raised."*

As a hundred years ago, the lands were too often untilled, so were the cultivators of the land too often untaught. Throughout England, the education of the labouring classes was most grievously neglected, the supineness of the clergy of that age being manifest on this point as on every other. It would be very easy to adduce many cases of deplorable ignorance and consequent credulity at that period both in individuals and in whole villages or parishes. A few will suffice, however, to establish my conclusion. — A remarkable man, in after years the chief of a religious

* Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, vol. iv. p. 287. This column, — the "Dunston Pillar," is now, I believe, the property of the Earl of Ripon.

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sect,—William Huntington,—describes himself as the son of poor parents in the Weald of Kent. Without any instruction during his first childhood, he found his vacant mind fill with silly fancies. "There was," says he, "in the village an excise-"man, of a stern and hard-favoured countenance, "whom I took notice of for having a stick covered "with figures, and an ink-bottle hanging at his "button-hole. This man I imagined to be employed "by God Almighty to take an account of chil-"dren's sins!"* A person of far superior merit and attainments,—Hannah More,—declares that on first going to the village of Cheddar, near the cathedral city of Wells, "we found more than two "hundred people in the parish, almost all very "poor; no gentry; a dozen wealthy farmers, "hard, brutal, and ignorant. . . . . We saw but "one Bible in all the parish, and that was used to "prop a flower-pot!"

Traces of ancient superstition were sometimes found to linger in the congenial darkness. Thus, in Northamptonshire, "Miss C. and her cousin, "walking, saw a fire in a field, and a crowd around "it. They said, 'what is the matter?—Killing a "calf.—What for?—To stop the murrain.' They

* Life of William Huntington, S. S. (that is, Sinner Saved), by himself, in his "Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer," p. 35. ed. 1793. He adds, "I thought he must have a great deal "to do to find out all the sins of children, and I eyed him as a "formidable being, and the greatest enemy I had in all the "world."

"went away as quickly as possible. On speaking "to the clergyman, he made inquiries. The people "did not like to talk of the affair, but it appeared "that when there is a disease among the cows, or "when the calves are born sickly, they sacrifice, "that is, kill and burn, one for good luck."*

Pass we next to Suffolk. There, in the village of Wattisham, and in the year 1762, it chanced that six children of one family died in quick succession of a sudden and mysterious illness, — their feet having first mortified and dropped off. Professor Henslow, who resides at no great distance from Wattisham, has given much attention to the records of their case, and has made it clear in his excellent Essay on the Diseases of Wheat, that in all probability their death was owing to their imprudent use of deleterious food — the Ergot of Rye. But he adds, that in the neighbourhood, the popular belief was firm, that these poor children had been the victims of sorcery and witchcraft.†

Among the principal means which under Providence, tended to a better spirit in the coming age, may be ranked the system of Sunday Schools. And of these, the main praise belongs to Robert

* Communication addressed to Jacob Grimm, and inserted by him in his *Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 576. ed. 1843. With his usual learning, he proceeds to show the genuine descent of this practice from a primæval Celtic rite. See also in White's Selborne (p. 295. ed. 1837), the stories of the seamed pollards and *shrew-ash*.

† Journal of the Royal Agricultural Society, vol. ii. p. 16.

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Raikes. There are indeed some previous claims alleged on behalf of other persons, especially Miss Hannah Ball, at High Wycombe, in 1769. But certainly, at least, the example did not spread at that time. The elder Mr. Raikes being printer and proprietor of the Gloucester Journal, had been brought before the House of Commons, in 1729, for the offence, as it was then considered, of reporting their debates.* His son, born in 1735, became in due time his successor in his business. Struck at the noise and riot of the poor boys in his native streets, Raikes the younger established the first of his Sunday Schools in 1781. Thus, in one of his early letters does he explain his views — further carried out in our own day by Lord Ashley's care: "I argue, therefore, if you can loiter about with- "out shoes and a ragged coat, you may as well "come to school and learn what may tend to your "good in that footing. All that I require are "clean hands, clean face, and the hair combed. ". . . . I cannot express to you the pleasure I "often receive in discovering genius and innate "good dispositions among this little multitude. "It is botanizing in human nature."†

The benevolent exertions of Mr. Raikes were well seconded and widely diffused. His Schools received the early patronage and aid of several eminent Prelates, especially Dr. Porteus, at that

* See the second volume of this History, p. 191. sec. ed.

† Robert Raikes to Colonel Townley, November 25. 1783.

time Bishop of Chester. Adam Smith bore his testimony to them in these remarkable words: — "No plan has promised to effect a change of "manners with equal ease and simplicity since the "days of the Apostles." Thus it happened that schools on Mr. Raikes's plan soon started up in almost every county. In London they owed their first secure establishment to the zeal of Mr. William Fox, a wholesale draper, assisted by Mr. Jonas Hanway, a gentleman who had first risen into notice by the publication, on a most ample scale, of his Journey to Persia in 1753—who, since that time, had been forward in all works of benevolence, as in the foundation of the Magdalen Charity in 1758—and who will be remembered as a philanthropist long after he is forgotten as a traveller.*

The progress of Agriculture at this period was greatly aided by the exertions of Arthur Young. As a working farmer in his youth he had applied himself with zeal to the improvement of tillage, and what he had begun as a profession ever afterwards continued his pursuit. He first attracted the attention of the public in 1768, by an account of a Six Weeks' Tour through the Southern Counties. The success of that experiment soon produced a Tour to the Northern Counties, in four volumes, and then another, of the same length, to the Eastern. These books were read the rather from their clear and lively style, and proved of great

* History of Sunday Schools, by Lewis G. Pray, Boston, U. S. 1847. See especially pp. 133—160.

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practical importance from the contrasts which they drew, and the emulation which they excited. In 1780 he also described, in print, a Journey which he had made to Ireland, and in 1784 commenced his Annals of Agriculture, a periodical in monthly parts. Among the many contributions to that useful work came several from George the Third, in fact, though not by name. More than a year elapsed ere Young discovered that his unknown correspondent, Mr. Ralph Robinson, of Windsor, who sent him accounts of a farm at Petersham, was no other than the King.

It may be worthy of note, that in Norfolk the system of large farms—a system sometimes imputed as a blot in the great agricultural improvements pursued at a later period by Mr. Coke, of Holkham—has on its side the high authority of Arthur Young. "Great farms," says he, "have "been the soul of the Norfolk culture; split them "into tenures of an hundred pounds a year, and "you will find nothing in the whole county but "beggars and weeds." Even in his time, as he declares, the husbandry in Norfolk had advanced to a much greater height than he had seen any where else in England over an equal extent of soil.*

But far superior to Arthur Young—superior as the researches of a Newton are above, though supporting and supported by, the observations of an Astronomical Table—stands the name of Adam Smith. Born at Kirkcaldy, in 1723, he was for many years

* Eastern Tour, vol. ii. p. 161. ed. 1771.

Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow; and his great work, "The Wealth of "Nations," first appeared in 1776. That year may well deserve, on its account, to rank as an era in political science. Even at the moment of its publication, Dr. Johnson, though he was no friend of Adam Smith, though they had once a personal altercation at the house of Mr. Strachan, most properly rebuked the shallow criticism of Sir John Pringle, that an author who had never been in trade could not be expected to write well upon that subject, any more than a lawyer upon physic. On the contrary, "there is nothing," said Johnson, in a true statesman's spirit, "which requires more "to be illustrated by philosophy than trade does."* And such illustration, such philosophy did, in rich measure, this great work supply. To say of the "Wealth of the Nations" that it has faults and errors is only to say, in other words, that it is the work of man. But not merely did Adam Smith found the science of Political Economy; we might almost say of him that he completed it, leaving, at least as some have thought, to his successors, not so much any new discoveries to make, or any further principles to prove, but far rather conjectures to hazard and consequences to pursue.

It was not long ere some of the main doctrines of Adam Smith found adherents and disciples not only in Scotland, but in England, not only in

* Life, by Boswell, under the date of March 16. 1776.

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England, but in France. In France they were, to some extent, engrafted on a small sect or party known by the name of "Economists," and founded by Dr. Quesnay, who had died in 1774.* The most eminent man at Paris who at first adhered to them was Turgot; the most eminent man in London, the Earl of Shelburne. With such men it was not long ere these doctrines left the domain of theory, and came, at least in some degree, to be tried in active life.

It was owing to Adam Smith, and to men like Adam Smith, that Scotland, in his time, was, on many points, in practical advance of England. Education, at least in the more populous districts, was then certainly better cared for. At Edinburgh the school of Medicine was then perhaps the best in the world. Its literary circle of that period has not often, in any country, been exceeded. In the improvement of tillage the Lothians took the lead, and kept it. Nearly all the good gardeners came at that time from the north of Tweed. Even Dr. Johnson could not gainsay them this praise; he could only qualify it by a sarcasm on the badness of their native climate. "Things which grow "wild here," said he, "must be cultivated with

* The best account of Dr. Quesnay is to be found in the Journal de Madame du Hausset, first printed in the "Melanges "d'Histoire et de Littérature," (Mr. Crawford's) in 1817. See also the note at p. 276. "Les Economistes l'appelaient *le* "*maître* et disaient comme jadis de Pythagore *le maître l'a* "*dit.*"

"great care in Scotland."* But further still we may trace among our northern neighbours a more early and enlightened zeal for measures of a sanitary character. Thus, in 1782, we find a Bill pass Parliament to prevent the slaughtering of cattle within the city of Edinburgh†, while similar prohibitions have been strangely neglected in London, even down to the present day.

Of both Edinburgh and London at that period, we may note how far either was as yet from its present size. Sir Walter Scott, where in Guy Mannering he treats of the close of the American War, says of his own romantic city, that "the "New Town on the north, since so much extend-"ed, was then just commenced. But the great "bulk of the better classes, and particularly those "connected with the law, still lived in flats or "dungeons of the Old Town." In London, the whole space west of Buckingham Gardens—that space now covered with stately squares and streets surpassing of themselves, in wealth and splendour, several whole cities and capitals of Europe—was, in 1765, no better than a line of marshy fields. The entire front of it was then offered for sale to George the Third, at the price of 20,000*l.* and might probably have been still cheaper to a private man.‡ In 1780, Mr. Romilly, writing to his sister from

* Life, by Boswell, under the date of October 6. 1769.

† This was the Act 22 Geo. III. ch. 52.

‡ See the Memoirs by Horace Walpole, vol. ii. p. 160, and vol. iii. p. 4.

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Gray's Inn, complains of the cold north winds, and remarks that between himself and Hampstead or Highgate there was only one row of houses.* But while masses of new tenements began to shoot forth on every side, the Government of the day took no thought or heed of reserving open spaces in the midst of them—either as parks for air and recreation, or as sites for future public buildings. A few thousands or even hundreds of pounds would then have sufficed to make the purchases for which at a later period hundreds of thousands would be needed.

As in Edinburgh, the tide of fashion turned from the Old Town to the New, so in London, though from other causes, the change was equally decided. Many of the favourite resorts of the rich and great in the last age have since been relinquished wholly to the middle classes. It may suffice to give as proofs the two chiefs of the last administration of Queen Anne. Bolingbroke, a man of the world no less than a man of business, lived in Golden Square, and Harley, till he became Lord Treasurer, in Buckingham Street, Strand. The rise and decline of Ranelagh — at one time by far the chief place of public entertainment—is another instance of the mutability of fashion. The ground on which it stood is now part of Chelsea Gardens, but had belonged to the Lords Ranelagh, and from thence its name. It was completed in 1742, and appears to

* Memoirs of Sir Samuel Romilly, by his sons, vol. i. p. 139.

have been pulled down in the first years of the present century. The principal room, called the Rotunda, had a span of 185 feet, in the centre an orchestra, and all round tiers of boxes, at which the company could sit down and take tea. "Two "nights ago" — thus, at the outset wrote Horace Walpole—"Ranelagh Gardens were opened "at Chelsea; the Prince, Princess, Duke, much "nobility, and much mob besides, were there. "There is a vast amphitheatre, finely gilt, painted, "and illuminated, into which every body that loves "eating, drinking, staring or crowding, is admitted "for twelve pence." And again two years afterwards when the fashion had grown: "Every night "constantly I go to Ranelagh, which has totally "beat Vauxhall. Nobody goes any where else— "every body goes there. My Lord Chesterfield is "so fond of it, that he says he has ordered all his "letters to be directed thither. You cannot set "your foot without treading on a Prince of Wales "or Duke of Cumberland!" *

Our Criminal Law at that period betrays, in its undiscriminating rigour, the spirit of a barbarous age. Even Blackstone, so staunch on most occasions in supporting the system which he found, inveighs against "these outrageous penalties," as he most truly terms them. Who would believe, he

* Horace Walpole to Mann, May 26. 1742, and to Conway, June 29. 1744. These and many other particulars of Ranelagh are collected in Mr. Peter Cunningham's entertaining and judicious Hand-book of London.

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says, that in the eighteenth century it could be made a capital crime to break down the mound of a fish-pond, or to cut down a cherry tree in an orchard? Who would believe, that till the hour when he wrote, it still continued a felony without benefit of clergy to be seen for one month in the company of gypsies, — "of persons who call themselves or are called Egyptians?"* The vindication of these laws, which Paley has attempted in his Moral Philosophy, dating from 1785, is surely a considerable blemish of that noble work. It is true, that in practice, such savage punishments were not commonly inflicted. The subtlety of the law was here called in to amend its rigour. Take, for example, the cases of theft within a dwelling house. Death being then denounced whenever the value of the property stolen exceeded forty shillings, it became usual for compassionate Juries, even by direction of the Judge, to return the value as below that sum, even where, on the clearest evidence, the value was much more. And thus, instead of extirpating the one abuse from the Statute Book, men tried to counteract it by another abuse in the opposite direction!

As these laws seemed the relic of a barbarous age, so did also some of the methods of enforcing them. Notwithstanding the merciful considera-

* Blackstone's Comment. vol. iv. p. 4. ed. 1825. The Statutes here referred to are the 9 Geo. I. c. 22., 31 Geo. II. c. 42. and 5. Eliz. c. 20. — all now repealed.

tion in many cases both of Judges and of Juries, the forfeiture of life for lesser crimes was in that age very frequent. The executions took place for the most part at Tyburn Gallows, which stood upon the present site of Connaught Place. It had been used for such scenes ever since the days of Henry the Fourth, and continued to be so till 1783, when an order was made that executions should henceforth take place in front of Newgate Prison. At Tyburn, many too celebrated malefactors met their doom. There, in 1724, suffered Jack Sheppard, amidst a concourse, it was said, of 200,000 persons; there, in 1725, Jonathan Wild "the Great." There, was hanged, in 1760, the more than half insane Earl Ferrers, for the murder of his land-steward; and there, in 1777, the unhappy Dr. Dodd, at one time an eminent or at least admired preacher, but who, in an evil hour yielding to temptation, had forged a bond in the name of his pupil, the young Earl of Chesterfield, hoping that he might be able to repay its amount before it could be detected. On these occasions it was not unusual to find a strange kind of merriment, blended with the horror. Thus, the hangman's noose was sometimes designated as "a Tyburn tippet," and the hangman himself, whatever his name might be, was always called "Jack Ketch," from the name of his predecessor in the days of James the Second. Jests flew from mouth to mouth, which it was said had been uttered by the criminals at the point of execution, and other still less pardonable jests

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proceeded from by-standers. Moreover, some men of fashion in that age, as George Selwyn, and George James, or, as he was called, "Gilly," Williams, had a morbid pleasure in witnessing these melancholy scenes. It appears, that whenever Selwyn could not himself attend an execution, he desired to receive a minute account of it from one of the eye-witnesses.* On other occasions also, as was well known to his friends, he took a strange delight in gazing upon corpses. The first Lord Holland, when upon his death-bed, said to his servant: "Next time Mr. Selwyn calls, by all "means show him up. If I am alive, I shall be "glad to see him, and if I am dead, he will be "glad to see me!"

In the eighteenth century, as in the darker ages, objects of horror were displayed without scruple to the public gaze. It is well known how, in 1746, the heads of the rebel chiefs were affixed on Temple Bar. At that period, Horace Walpole, as he "passed under the new heads," saw "people "make a trade of letting spying-glasses at a half-"penny a look!"† But on other occasions also, and for other motives, there was a like exhibition to the passers by. Thus, in the case of the murder of John Hayes, in 1726, the head of the murdered

* See, for instance, Dr. Dodd's execution described by Mr. A. Storer in Selwyn's Correspondence, vol. iii. p. 197. as edited by Mr. Jesse.

† To George Montagu, August 16. 1746. This was before the execution of Lords Balmerino, Kilmarnock, &c.

man who was then unknown, was set forth upon a pole in the churchyard of St. Margaret's Westminster, in hopes that the features might be recognised by some of the spectators, and that by these means a discovery might be made.* The pillory also — a most unjustifiable form of punishment, because not wholly judicial, and since the populace were allowed to take part in it by pelting — continued all through that century, and was undergone by such men as De Foe.

In that century the Prisons of Great Britain were teeming with frightful abuses. The popular suspicion or belief of such may be traced through the satires of the previous age.† In 1729, as I have elsewhere shown, there had been an inquiry by the House of Commons, so far at least as London was concerned.‡ But the Committee which then pursued its investigation and presented its Reports served mainly to disclose the evil, and did little to afford a remedy. Thus did both cruelty and peculation continue well nigh uncontrolled till the appearance of John Howard. That remarkable man belonged to the sect of English Dissenters called the Independents. It is supposed rather

* See the "Tyburn Chronicle," vol. ii. p. 265., as published in 1768.

† Swift's description of the "Morning," written in 1709, has the following lines: —

"The turnkey now his flock returning sees,
"Duly let out a nights to steal for fees."

Works, vol. xiv. p. 94. ed. 1814.

‡ See vol. ii. p. 227. sec. ed.

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than known that he was born at Hackney in 1726. Of feeble health and wounded affections—for he was twice a widower before he was forty years of age—he had retired to his small patrimony of Cardington, near Bedford. No man was ever less ambitious of fame or seemed less likely to attain it. Besides some slight contributions to the Royal Society on the science of meteorology, and unwearied contributions of another kind to the neighbouring poor, he lived in close retirement. He read his Bible and he noted his thermometer, and he desired only to pursue the even tenor of his way. But, as it chanced, he was named, in 1773, High Sheriff of his county. As such he was determined to fulfil his appointed duties. As such he listened attentively to the trials of the prisoners in court; and inspected with the utmost care every part of the county gaol. Its walls were already dignified by the long captivity of Bunyan. And thus from that obscure and petty prison of Bedford —as one of the biographers of Howard has well observed—proceeded two of the noblest and most precious works of man — Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" and Howard's labour of charity and love.*

The circumstance that first gave rise to Howard's zeal on behalf of prisoners, was his seeing many who being declared Not Guilty after months perhaps of confinement were dragged back to prison, and locked up again until they should pay their

* Life by Hepworth Dixon, p. 140.

appointed fees to the gaoler. Howard applied to his brother magistrates that the gaoler might henceforth be remunerated by a salary instead of fees. The Bench saw the grievous hardship, and were willing to grant the relief desired. But they wanted a precedent for charging the county with the expense. Forthwith did the High Sheriff mount his horse and ride through the neighbouring counties in search of precedents. But he soon learned that the same injustice was practised in them; and looking into their prisons he beheld scenes of calamity which he grew daily more and more anxious to relieve.

From that hour the zeal of Howard never slackened. In the fine language of the Psalmist, his heart yearned to such as sit in darkness and the shadow of death, being fast bound in misery and iron. Before the close of 1774 he had visited almost every prison-house in England. In almost all he found grievous though varying faults of management; and in some it may be said no management at all. Three from the many scores of his reports must here suffice as samples of the rest. And first as to the Plymouth Town-Gaol:—

"There are three rooms for felons; the one about "five feet and a half high, with a wicket in the door "seven inches by five, to admit light and air. To "this, as I was informed, three men who were con-"fined near two months under sentence of trans-"portation, came by turns for breath. The door had "not been opened for five weeks when I with dif-

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"ficulty entered to see a pale inhabitant. He had "been there ten weeks under sentence of transpor- "tation, and said he had much rather have been "hanged than confined in that noisome cell. . . . "The whole is dirty and has not been white-washed "for many years. No court, no water. The gaol- "ers live distant, they are the three sergeants at "Mace."

Come we next to the County Gaol at Salisbury: —"Just outside the prison-gate was a round staple "fixed in the wall; through it was put a chain, "at each end of which a common-side debtor pad- "locked by the leg stood offering to those who "pass by nets, laces, purses, and so forth made in "the prison. At Christmas felons chained toge- "ther are permitted to go about; one of them "carrying a sack or basket for food: another a box "for money. 20*l.* a year of the Chaplain's salary "(which in all is 40*l.*) is paid by Lord Weymouth "by a bequest of Thomas Thynne, Esq. Lord "Pembroke pays a legacy of 5*l.* a year out of the "manor of Swallow Cliff in this county; part to "the Chaplain himself, namely a guinea for a hat; "the remainder to be by him distributed among "the prisoners."

Gloucester Castle may stand last. Here the night-room (or main) for men felons, though up a number of steps, was found to be close and dark, and the floor so ruinous that it could not be washed. Only one sewer and no bath. The gaol-fever always prevalent and often mortal. No separation

enforced between the sexes; giving rise to much licentious intercourse and to many illegitimate children born within the gaol. The keeper had no salary—the debtors no allowance of food. The first lived on extortion and the latter on charity. Yet amidst all these flagitious abuses of Gloucester Castle it is pleasing here again to trace the benevolent hand of the founder of Sunday Schools. Thus continues Howard: "In September the "felons were very pitiable objects indeed; half-"naked and almost famished. But in December "their appearance was much altered. Mr. Raikes "and other gentlemen took pity on them, and "generously contributed towards the feeding and "clothing them. Mr. Raikes continues his unre-"mitting attention to the prisoners." *

The exertions of Howard were not long in bearing their good fruit. Early in 1774, he was examined at the Bar of the House of Commons, and received the thanks of the House for his "interesting observations." Before the close of that Session, two Bills were passed for the better regulation of prisons. By the first — which Mr. Popham, member for Taunton, had introduced in the preceding Session, but then without success — the fees of gaolers were abolished, and a fixed remuneration was assigned them payable from the County rates. By the second, the Justices were authorised and required to provide for the white-washing and cleansing of prisons, the establish-

* See Howard's State of Prisons, pp. 363. 376. 389. ed. 1784.

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ment of infirmaries, and the proper care of prisoners.

The object that gave Howard his first impulse was now fulfilled. But his labours had meanwhile assumed a wider scope, a more universal design. In the first place, he determined to revisit the gaols which he had already examined, in order to satisfy himself that the new Acts were duly and fairly enforced. Next, in his zeal for a much larger measure of improvement, he not only completed his examination of the gaols in the remaining English shires, but journeyed, on the same benevolent errand, through Scotland, through Ireland, and through most other European countries. In 1777, by which time he had travelled upwards of thirteen thousand miles, he published his great work "On Prisons." In this he gave not merely the results of his experience — a vast mass of observations in divers places — but also the general rules and principles which he had deduced from them. It is not too much to say, that this work has formed the text-book of all subsequent writers on the subject. It is not too much to say, that as Adam Smith was the true founder of Political Economy, so was his contemporary Howard the true founder of Prison Discipline.

In the years that followed his first publications, Howard was far from relaxing in his labours. He continued his vigilant inspection both of dungeons and hospitals, both at home and abroad; and in 1789, he gave to the world his second book, which

he entitled "On Lazarettos," although, in fact, his remarks on the system of Quarantine fill but a small portion of its pages. In the summer of the same year, he set forth on a longer journey than any he had yet undertaken. Desiring to extend his inquiries on the subject of the plague, he purposed to travel through Russia to the Asiatic provinces of Turkey, and to return by the Barbary States. But he had proceeded no further than Cherson in Russian Tartary, when he fell ill of a malignant fever. He soon felt that the hand of death was upon him, and named a neighbouring village for a burial-place. "Give me no monument," he said, "but lay me quietly in the earth; place a "sun-dial over my grave, and let me be forgotten." He died on the 20th of January, 1790, and was interred in the spot he had selected. A stately monument to Howard, from the chisel of Bacon, was the first ever erected in St. Paul's. But still more enduring will be the memory of the wise rules that he has written, and of the good deeds that he has wrought.*

* There are three biographies of Howard by Dr. James Brown, 1823; by Hepworth Dixon, Esq., 1849; and by the Rev. J. Field, 1850; besides an excellent sketch in the *Essays from the Times*, 1851. Among the many writers who have followed Howard, none deserves more respectful mention than the Rev. John Clay, Chaplain of the Preston House of Correction. His Annual Reports to the Lancashire Magistrates, — above all, those of 1849, 1850, and 1851, — abound with curious facts and important deductions.

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The general view of our life and manners, which I have here attempted to unfold, may perhaps strike some readers as too harshly drawn. It may seem to them to gainsay the statement of our prosperity and well being at that very period with which my first chapter commenced. Yet, in truth, the two descriptions are not only reconcileable, but they closely adhere together. For although the condition of England in the last century may seem dark and faulty when contrasted with the condition of England now, it looks bright whenever held up against the other European states of the same day. And herein, from age to age, lies, as I conceive, the source of our greatest pride. It is now four hundred years since a most discerning and impartial observer, Philip de Comines, declared that in his judgment the English were superior in their rule and government, in their respect for persons and property, to any other nation that he knew.* It is true that the other nations of the eighteenth century might justly look down upon the English of the fifteenth. But meanwhile the English also had advanced, so that their relative superiority was still maintained.

But let us view the case more closely. Let us compare, in a little more detail, the English as they were in the middle of the last century with other contemporary nations. If we look to the east—as to Poland and Russia—can any man doubt what must have been the condition of the peasantry

* See his Mémoires, livre v. chap. 19.

bound by law to the soil, and bought or sold along with it? Can any man doubt that under such a system they were scarcely raised above their own cattle, either in attainments or in the estimation of their rulers? If we look to the west—as to Portugal or Spain—can it be denied that the barbarous practice of Torture still prevailed for the purpose of extorting a confession? Can it be denied that the bloody tribunal of the Inquisition was still at work to crush all development of thought—all liberty of conscience? If thence we cast our eyes to France, we discover the common people weighed down by most onerous taxes, such as the GABELLE, and the higher ranks privileged against taxation by their LETTRES DE NOBLESSE. There, as in Italy and Spain, we may observe among the upper and middle classes at that time a systematic violation of the marriage vow. We may find the degenerate heirs of historic names full of contempt for all professions but that of arms—devoting their whole lives to ease and pleasure in the capitals—and to their villagers known only by their exactions. But let us turn from these to the dominions of by far the most enlightened King and most active reformer of his day. Let us pass to the subjects of Frederick "the Great," as his contemporaries called him, and as on many points he was well worthy to be called. Here then we find the strictest line of demarcation maintained between nobles and plebeians; the Sovereign assuming to the latter, even when invested with high official rank, all the state of an

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LIFE AND MANNERS.

Eastern Sultan, not giving them his hand to kiss, but only the hem of his garment. No plebeian, unless in very rare cases, could obtain promotion in the army. No plebeian, unless by special favour, could buy a nobleman's estate. Coffee, tobacco, and salt were retained as Government monopolies. Manufacturing industry was restricted within town-walls. So lately as 1774, an Edict was issued, making the export of wool a capital offence. Invalide soldiers, who could not spell, but only swear, were appointed the schoolmasters. Jews were subject to an ignominious poll-tax, in common with the beasts of burthen.* If, then, we find abuses such as these with so high-spirited a people as the Prussian, and with so renowned a prince as Frederick the Second, how much worse may we not suspect of other European nations, and other European monarchs, of that time? If — as we may here presume to apply the solemn words — if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?

The main fact is — and it serves to explain in a great measure every other fact connected with this question — that in the middle of the last century, all the States on the Continent of Europe, except only Holland and some few Cantons of Switzerland, were subject to the unlimited control of Mon-

* For a fuller account of the Prussian system of government at that time, I venture to refer the reader to an Essay (mainly compiled from Dr. Preuss's volumes) in the Quarterly Review, No. cxliii. December, 1847.

archical or Aristocratical power. While despotism in one or other of these forms was weighing on them, the Commons of England retained as in the previous age a certain, and that considerable, share in the direction of their own affairs. This was the vivifying flame of freedom which, never quenched and but seldom obscured among us, nor yet, as in some foreign states, spreading to a conflagration, has made us what we are, and were from age to age. In closing, then, these seven Decades of the History of England, I firmly adhere to the assertion, which I stated in their first page, eighteen years ago. I still say, that, on the whole, and as compared with the contemporary annals of other countries, it was a period combining happiness and glory — a period of kind rulers, and a prosperous people. They were prosperous because they had freedom, and because that freedom was restrained within ancient and appointed bulwarks; and they will cease to be prosperous, when either of these conditions shall cease to be fulfilled.

June, 1854.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO LORD MAHON.

[Stanhope Papers.]

High Wycombe, April 7. 1780.

My dear Lord,

I am very sorry that the Buckinghamshire Committee has been appointed to meet in London, as they cannot be assisted by the country members without manifest inconvenience. I cannot, with any propriety, ask the gentlemen in this part to go out of the county.

As to the business which it meets upon, I can only repeat to your Lordship, that I cannot discover in the plan of the Yorkshire Association a single exceptionable principle. General union is acknowledged to be essential to our success. To this end, there must be a reasonable lead somewhere. Where can it remain so safely or so honourably as with the Meeting of the County of York, which took its rise from a sense of oppression, who have uniformly proceeded hitherto with a view to measures and not to men, and regarding whom there does not exist the smallest well founded suspicion of the interference of party? Next as to the points which are made subjects of association. It is acknowledged, that the approaching Election has a very great influence on the divisions now taking place in the House of Commons in favour of Reform and redress of grievances. The county members have very generally voted on the public side, except a few who are likely to lose their seats by not doing so.—What, then, is so natural or so reasonable, as to follow where these principles lead, and desire that Parliaments shall be shortened, and an effectual addition or substitution of county members made to the present House of Commons?

1780. My principle does not go to influence the political opinion of any man. But I think it a duty to declare my own, and your Lordship will do me a great deal of honour by communicating these as my sentiments to the Committee either individually or collectively, if those of absent persons shall be alluded to.

I have the honour to be, with the greatest attachment,

&c., &c.,

SHELBURNE.

SIR HENRY CLINTON TO LORD GEORGE GERMAINE.

(*Secret.*)

New York, August 25. 1780.
(*Received Sept.* 25.)

MY LORD,

I HAVE thought this letter of so much importance that I have induced Brigadier General Dalrymple, notwithstanding his high and responsible station in this army, to be the bearer of it. His intimate knowledge of my opinions concerning public affairs in America, and of the circumstances on which they are founded, will enable him, I trust, to satisfy your Lordship in any points on which you may wish a further discussion.

I had the honour to inform you in my last public despatch, that I had placed the troops in front of Kingsbridge defences.

On the 18th July, by a courier from the east end of Long Island, the first intelligence was received of the arrival of the French fleet off Rhode Island on the 10th, which I transmitted immediately to Admiral Arbuthnot.

In the hope that I might be able to undertake something offensive against the enemy newly disembarked, I had, in expectation of their coming, requested that transports for 6000 men might be kept in readiness for the immediate embarkation of troops. Notwithstanding the tardy notice I had of the enemy's arrival, I yet determined, as speedily as possible, to put a body of troops afloat in the Sound, at hand either for operation eastward, if practicable, or to be brought rapidly back

and act against the rebel army, should they, in my absence, form any enterprise on these posts. 1780.

Many causes conspired to retard the anchoring of the transports off Frog's Neck, from which place my embarkation was effected, but not until the 27th.

From the 28th to the 31st of July, I kept the fleet of transports in Huntingdon Bay; but the Admiral having sent me advice that the French had since their landing, then a fortnight, been employed in strengthening themselves with new works and batteries added to those we had quitted, and that they had drawn to their assistance the force of the neighbouring district, I found no encouragement to my hope of effecting anything with the troops solely. I am well persuaded that after my zealous offer for a joint attempt of fleet and army, the Admiral, had he conceived an attack practicable upon that footing, would have invited me to it. Under these circumstances I returned with the army to Whitestone, where the troops are landed, and where the transports lie ready to receive them again if necessary.

During this time General Washington, with an army increased to 12,000 men, moved from his position in the Jersey Mountains to King's Ferry, where he crossed the Hudson on the 2nd inst., and from whence he advanced towards Croton River. He probably supposed my armament sailed for Rhode Island, and intended either to threaten New York, or to move to succour the French.

On the — —, Washington repassed the river; his troops are now near Orange Town.

At this new epoch in the war, when a foreign force has already landed, and an addition to it is expected, I owe to my country, and I must in justice to my own fame declare to your Lordship, that I become every day more sensible of the utter impossibility of prosecuting the war in this country without reinforcements. And I must add, that with every succour I require — unless I have the good fortune to meet in the commander of the fleet a gentleman whose views with respect to the conduct of the war are similar to my own, and whose co-

1780. operation with me, as Commander-in-Chief and Commissioner, is cordial, uniform, and animated,—the powers with which the King may, in his most gracious confidence, intrust me, any more than my own exertions, cannot have their fair trial or their full efficacy.

The revolutions fondly looked for by means of friends to the British Government, I must represent as visionary. These, I well know, are numerous, but they are fettered. An inroad is no countenance, and to possess territory demands garrisons. The accession of friends, without we occupy the country they inhabit, is but the addition of unhappy exiles to the list of pensioned refugees.

If it has required 6000 men to hold Carolina, where nature has traced out a defensible boundary against outward foes, and given little resource for domestic insurrection, surely, my Lord, I cannot hope with the field army my Whitestone Embarkation Return exhibits (six thousand men), first to subdue, and then to cover and protect, the neighbouring populous tracts, circumscribed by no natural impediments, and full of enemies and resources. Nor will reason warrant the assertion, that from the friends to Government, who pine in oppression within the limits of the usurpation, we are to expect those aids that are to disperse Mr. Washington's army, or maintain the country against him.

With the addition of 6000 men, and security against a superior fleet and a foreign army, I trust the peninsula between Chesapeak and Delaware might be reduced to obedience. That district is locally friendly to the masters of the sea. But dependent as its geography has rendered it, a less force than 4000 could not after conquest screen it from insult.

Arrived at that stage of success, a glance upon the Returns of the army divided into garrisons and reduced by casualties on the one part, with the consideration of the task yet before us on the other, would, I fear, renew the too just reflection, that we are by some thousands too weak to subdue this formidable rebellion.

I am sensible, my Lord, that men reason with partiality

towards themselves; but there is in my breast so full a conviction of the rectitude of my intentions, and of the candour and fairness of my proceedings with the Admiral, that, with the strictest scrutiny into my conduct, I can trace the difficulties and clogs the service suffers from want of his cordial, uniform, and animated co-operation, to no cause in which I can impute blame to myself. 1780.

I have the honour to transmit by General Dalrymple, a state of the troops under my command, of the 1st inst., and of being, with the greatest respect, &c., &c.,

H. Clinton.

CASE OF MAJOR ANDRÉ.

[Extract from Sir Henry Clinton's MS. Memoirs.]

(*September*, 1780.)

About eighteen months before the present period, Mr. Arnold, a Major-General in the American service, had found means to intimate to me that having cause to be dissatisfied with many late proceedings of the American Congress, particularly their alliance with France, he was desirous of quitting them and joining the cause of Great Britain, could he be certain of personal security and indemnification for whatever loss of property he might thereby sustain. An overture of that sort, coming from an officer of Mr. Arnold's ability and fame, could not but attract my attention; and as I thought it possible that, like another General Monk, he might have repented of the part he had taken, and wish to make atonement for the injuries he had done his country by rendering her some signal and adequate benefit, I was of course liberal in making him such offers and promises as I judged most likely to encourage him in his present temper. A correspondence was opened between us under feigned names, in the course of which, he, from time to time, transmitted to me most material intelligence; and with a view, as I supposed, of rendering us still more essential service he

1780. obtained in July, 1780, the command of all the enemy's forts in the Highlands, then garrisoned by about 4000 men.

In the mean time, wishing to reduce to an absolute certainty whether the person I had so long corresponded with was actually Major-General Arnold commanding at West Point, I agreed to a proposal made me, to permit some officer in my confidence to have a personal conference with him, when every thing might be more explicitly settled than it was possible to do by letter; and as he required that my Adjutant-General, Major André, who had chiefly conducted the correspondence with him under the signature of John Anderson, should meet him for this purpose on neutral ground, I was induced to consent to his doing so from my very great confidence in that officer's prudence and address. Some attempts towards a meeting had been accordingly made before Sir George Rodney's arrival; but though the plans had been well laid, they were constantly frustrated by some untoward accident or other, one of which had very nearly cost Mr. Arnold his life. These disappointments made him of course cautious; and as I now became anxious to forward the execution of my project, while I could have that naval chief's assistance, and under so good a mask as the expedition for the Chesapeak, which enabled me to make every requisite preparation without being suspected, I consented to another proposal from General Arnold for Major André to go to him by water from Dobbs's Ferry, in a boat which he would himself send for him under a flag of truce; for I could have no reason to suspect that any bad consequence could possibly result to Major André from such a mode, as I had given it in charge to him *not to change his dress on any account*, or possess himself of writings by which the nature of his embassy might be traced; and I understood that after his business was finished he was to be sent back in the same way.

But unhappily none of these precautions were observed. On the contrary, General Arnold for reasons which he judged important, or perhaps (which is the most probable) losing at the moment his usual presence of mind, thought proper to drop the design of sending Major André back by water, and prevailed upon him (or rather compelled him, as would appear by that

unfortunate officer's letter to me*,) to part with his uniform, and under a borrowed disguise to take a circuitous route to New York, through the posts of the enemy under the sanction of his passport. The consequence was, as might be expected, that he was stopped at Tarrytown and searched; and certain papers being found about him concealed, he was, notwithstanding his passport, carried prisoner before Mr. Washington, to whom he candidly acknowledged his name and quality. Measures were of course immediately taken upon this to seize General Arnold; but that officer, being fortunate enough to receive timely notice of Major André's fate, effected his escape to a King's sloop lying off Teller's point, and came the next day to New York. 1780.

I was exceedingly shocked, as may be supposed, by this very unexpected accident, which not only totally ruined a most important project, which had all the appearance of being in a happy train of success, but involved in danger and distress a confidential friend for whom I had very deservedly the warmest esteem. Not immediately knowing, however, the full extent of the misfortune, I did not then imagine the enemy could have any motive for pushing matters to extremity, as the bare detention of so valuable an officer's person might have given him a great power and advantage over me. And I was accordingly in hopes that an official demand from me for his immediate release, as having been under the sanction of a flag of truce when he landed within his posts, might shorten his captivity or at least stop his proceeding with rigour against him. But the cruel and unfortunate catastrophe convinced me that I was much mistaken in my opinion of both his policy and humanity.

* Extract of a letter from Major André to Sir H. Clinton. Tappan, Sept. 29, 1780. "I have obtained General Washington's permission to send you "this letter; the object of which is to remove from your breast any suspi- "cion that I could imagine I was bound by your Excellency's orders to "expose myself to what has happened. The events of coming within the "enemy's posts and of changing my dress, which led me to my present situa- "tion, were contrary to my own intentions, as they were to your orders; and "the circuitous route which I took to return was *imposed*, perhaps unavoid- "ably, *without any relation upon me*."

1780. For, delivering himself up, as it should seem, to the rancour excited by the near accomplishment of a plan which might have effectually restored the King's authority, and humbled him from his present exalted situation, he burned with a desire of wreaking his vengeance on the principal actors in it; and consequently, regardless of the acknowledged worth and abilities of the amiable young man who had fallen into his hands, and in opposition to every principle of policy and call of humanity, he without remorse put him to a most ignominious death, and this at a moment when one of his Generals was by his appointment in actual conference with commissioners whom I had sent to treat with him for Major André's release.

The manner in which Major André was drawn to the enemy's shore, manifestly at the instance and under the sanction of the General Officer who had the command of the district; and his being avowedly compelled by that officer to change his dress and name, and return under his passport by land, were circumstances which, as they certainly very much lessen the imputed criminality of his offence, ought to have at least softened the severity of the Council of War's opinion respecting it, notwithstanding his imprudence in having possessed himself of the papers which they found on him, which, though they led to a discovery of the nature of the business that drew him to a conference with General Arnold, were not wanted (as they must have known) for my information. For they were not ignorant that I had myself been over every part of the ground on which the forts stood, and had of course made myself perfectly acquainted with every thing necessary for facilitating an attack upon them. Mr. Washington ought also to have remembered that I had never in any one instance punished the disaffected colonists within my power with death, but, on the contrary, had in several shown the most humane attention to his intercession even in favour of avowed spies. His acting therefore in so cruel a manner in opposition to my earnest solicitations, could not but excite in me the greatest surprise, especially as no advantage whatever could be possibly expected to his cause from putting the object of them to death. Nor could he be

insensible, had he the smallest spark of honour in his own breast, that the example, though ever so terrible and ignominious, would never deter a British officer from treading in the same steps, whenever the service of his country should require his exposing himself to the like danger in such a war. But the subject affects me too deeply to proceed, nor can my heart cease to bleed, whenever I reflect on the very unworthy fate of this most amiable and valuable young man, who was adorned with the rarest endowments of education and nature, and had he lived could not but have attained the highest honours of his profession.* 1780.

EDWARD GIBBON, ESQ., TO EDWARD ELIOT, ESQ.

[Eliot Papers.]

Bentinck Street, September 3, 1780.

My dear Sir,

I have not attempted to shake your decided resolution; nor shall I presume to arraign the consistency of the electors of Liskeard whom you *so gravely* introduce. You are undoubtedly free as air, to confer or withdraw your Parliamentary favours: and I should despise my own ingratitude, were I capable of forgetting my past obligations to you, because you are not disposed to render them more perfect, or more permanent.

I am still ignorant what will be the consequences of your refusal; but I declare, upon my honour, that at the date of my

* Mr. Sparks, in his Life of Arnold (p. 288., ed. 1835), while vindicating the part taken by his countrymen in the case of Major André, urges as one main argument that Sir Henry Clinton, in the narrative which he sent to the British Government, "stated all the facts minutely, but without uttering "any censure against Washington or the Board of Officers, and without "intimating an opinion that the sentence was unjust." "These are proofs," continues Mr. Sparks, "and more might be adduced, that the opinions of "Sir Henry Clinton on this subject were essentially the same as those of "General Washington." But from the preceding passage of his Memoirs, which Mr. Sparks had no opportunity of seeing, it will plainly appear that the reserve of Clinton upon this subject in his public correspondence, proceeded in no degree from any acquiescence in the justice or propriety of Washington's course.

1780. last letter they appeared to me exactly in the light in which I represented them: that I had never formed any hopes, much less any claims of Ministerial support, and that I never opened my lips on the subject to the Noble friend whose character seems to extort the praise of his political enemies. Since your absolute refusal, I have been encouraged to hazard an application, which has been kindly entertained. If it proves unsuccessful, the principal difficulty will arise from the lateness of my request. I am asked why Mr. Eliot, who re-elected a placeman last year, has maintained to the last moment an ambiguous silence, without condescending to inform me that I must not depend on his friendship at the General Election. I confess that I am at a loss for an answer.

I am equally at a loss how to answer that part of your letter which represents in polite language my Parliamentary conduct as the cause of your displeasure. You will not expect that I should justify the grounds of every silent vote which I have given, or that I should write a political pamphlet on the eventful history of the last six years. But I may fairly rest my apology on the truth of a single assertion, that I have never renounced any principle, deserted any connection, or violated any promise. I have uniformly asserted, both in public and private, the justice of the American war: I have constantly supported in Parliament the general measures of Government, except at one particular crisis, while it was doubtful, after Burgoyne's defeat, whether they would offer terms to the rebels. I agreed with you in a speculative opinion, almost equally rejected by both parties, that after the substance of power was lost, the name of independence might be granted to the Americans.

I have often and severely censured the *faults* of administration, but I have always condemned the *system* of opposition; and your judgment will allow that in public life every man is reduced to the necessity of choosing the side which upon the whole appears to him the least reprehensible. The mere acceptance of a seat at the Board of Trade does not surely convey any reproach or disgrace; since you yourself, my dear

Sir, have held the same disqualifying place under several successive administrations, without any of these domestic reasons, which, if an excuse were necessary, might be alleged in my favour. You revive an old conversation between us, concerning Mr. Peachy's election, which passed, if I am not mistaken, in the garret of the House of Commons. At that time, I had never given a single vote against the actual measures of Government: and the indiscreet opinion which you urged me to declare, must apply to your sentiments, not to my own. I thought, and I still think, that were I master of a Borough, I would not, from motives of interest, elect a *stranger* whose political principles were repugnant to my own. 1780.

Thus far, for my own honour, I have been forced into this unpleasant, though I hope not intemperate explanation; but I perfectly concur with your wish to avoid all future complaints or apologies.

I most willingly embrace the offers of your private friendship, and I shall always cultivate a cordial intercourse with a person who is entitled to my esteem and gratitude.

I beg you will present my kindest wishes and compliments to Mrs. Eliot, and the rest of your family. I suppose Mr. Edward will succeed me at Liskeard.

I am, my dear Sir, your most obedient and affectionate humble servant,

E. Gibbon.*

SECRET LETTER FROM M. NECKER TO LORD NORTH.

[North Papers.]

Paris, ce 1 *Décembre*, 1780.

Pour vous seul, my Lord.

Une personne actuellement absente de Paris, et que M. Walpole aura peut-être nommée, my Lord l'ayant engagée dans

* In his Memoirs (p. 278.) Gibbon thus speaks of this transaction: — "In the premature Dissolution which followed, I lost my seat. Mr. Eliot "was now deeply engaged in the measures of Opposition, and the electors "of Liskeard are commonly of the same opinion as Mr. Eliot."

1780. une démarche qu'on n'a point avouée, M. Walpole s'est trouvé dans le cas de s'ouvrir à moi, et ayant eu connaissance à cette occasion de quelques fragmens d'une lettre qu'il a reçu de vous, j'ai été si frappé de la manière noble et franche avec laquelle vous manifestez d'une manière générale votre amour pour la paix que cette lecture a animé en moi une idée qui vous montrera tout au moins, my Lord, l'estime parfaite que j'ai de votre caractère, et ne pourra pas j'espère vous donner une mauvaise opinion du mien. Vous désirez la paix, je la désire aussi. Rapprochés ainsi par un sentiment si juste et par la droiture de nos intentions, pourquoi ne tenterions nous pas ce qu'essayeront un jour les Ministres de la Politique? Nous ne leur ravirions pas les honneurs d'un Traité, mais nous pourrions préparer les premières voies ou connaître du moins si le temps est encore venu. J'ai toujours cru que la modération, le bon sens, et la loyauté étaient le fondement des négociations, et les abrégeaient infiniment. Vous avez, je sais, my Lord, la confiance du Roi d'Angleterre; et comment ne l'auriez-vous pas d'après les services longs et soutenus que vous lui avez rendu pendant tout le cours de votre honorable et brillante administration? Je ne puis pas me glorifier d'avoir les mêmes droits à celle du Roi, mais je crois pouvoir vous assurer que des ouvertures raisonnables réussiraient tout aussi bien dans mes mains que dans celles de tout autre. Mais S. M. doit tenir ainsi que le Roi d'Angleterre à une paix honorable, et c'est là où commencent, je le sens bien, des difficultés. Vous avez sûrement plus de lumières et de facilités que moi pour indiquer les moyens qui peuvent concilier les prétensions des Parties Belligérantes; mais sachant que tant que c'est M. Necker qui parle à Lord North mes paroles ne seront pas comptées, et que je les confie d'ailleurs à un homme fidèle, je dirai franchement du premier abord qu'en réfléchissant à part moi sur cette matière, je croirais qu'une trève plus ou moins longue, pendant laquelle les Parties Belligérantes en Amérique y conserveraient d'une manière indépendante ce qu'elles possèdent, serait un premier aperçu raisonnable. Les échanges à faire entre la France et l'Angleterre me paraissent faciles, ainsi que l'oubli de ce com-

missaire inutile et irritant de Dunkerque. Quant à l'Espagne, à qui le Roi doit fidélité et attachement, je n'oserais m'aventurer à parler de ses convenances et de ses prétensions, mais il est possible et presque probable qu'elles vous sont connues. 1782.

Si mon idée contrarie dans l'essentiel l'opinion que vous avez des sentimens du Roi d'Angleterre, votre réponse finira notre correspondance.

Je dois vous observer, My Lord, que dans aucun cas il ne pourra convenir aux intérêts du Roi d'ouvrir une négociation publique avant que les bases fussent assurées secrètement. La raison en est simple. Une négociation publique servirait puissamment votre crédit et ferait peu pour nous; parceque le crédit n'est qu'une portion de nos ressources, et qu'il est plus fondé sur une bonne administration intérieure que sur les circonstances politiques.*

MR. GRATTAN TO LORD MAHON.

[Stanhope Papers.]

Dublin, April 18, 1782.

My Lord,

I had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter, which I should have answered instantly, but was prevented by illness. I entirely enter into the spirit of your Lordship's objection to a partial repeal of the 6th Geo. I. Undoubtedly it would have been inadequate either to the purpose of jurisdiction or of legislation. The part of the law proposed to be left unrepealed, amounts to the exercise of a legislative power, and therefore, in order to relinquish legislative supremacy, the appellant judicature should be relinquished also.

I took the liberty of stating in the House of Commons yesterday your just and liberal sentiments with respect to Ireland,

* "This letter was sent under cover to Lady North by the hand of a French "trader, who was ignorant from whom it came; nor had Mr. Walpole been "told of it. A pamphlet was thrown in with it to give it the appearance of "a packet." (Note to the MS. letter.)

1782. and stated your just distinction and motive, which was universally well received and admitted.

We have unanimously passed an Address to His Majesty, setting forth the causes of our discontents and jealousies. The Address is the answer to the Message: it is conceived in terms respectful to (the) King, soothing to the spirit of England without deserting the rights or character of Ireland. I am sure your Lordship will think that there is no one head of that Address which Ireland ought to depart from, and which Great Britain ought not in justice and wisdom, and may not with magnanimity, surrender. After the legislative claim is surrendered, the remainder, very material to the rights and feelings of the Irish, is nothing to England. The determining our prospects in her House of Lords or Court of King's Bench is very dilatory, expensive, and shameful to us, but of no use to you, if you renounce the supremacy of legislature. Your Lordship's country was only interested in reserving the appellant judicature so long as she reserved a claim which the Courts here could not acknowledge: relinquishing the claim to take away our rights, there is political reason for determining our laws. As to the after questions; the power exercised, but most undoubtedly not in its extent warranted by law, by the Privy Councils of both kingdoms, I am convinced your Lordship will see that it is not valuable to the British nation, nor is she in the smallest degree concerned in preserving it. You will also perceive that it (is) a total departure from the British Constitution, and a badge of slavery.

The Mutiny Bill in its perpetual state is an injury to both kingdoms: in short, if our enumerated causes of discontents and jealousies are duly considered, I do insist upon it that the claim of legislation is the only one in which the power of England has the appearance of being concerned, and that this claim of legislation to England is but the name of power. So you lose nothing which is real by a final settlement, and you will gain the confidence of Ireland, which is worth all the Declaratory Acts which power can make to affront men into a sense of their liberty. Your Lordship will find this kingdom

1782.

has defined her grievances, and is not progressive in her discontents. Ever since I remember Parliament, the 6th of Geo. I., and the powers assumed by the Council, have been complained of. Your Lordship will be pleased, moreover, to consider that it was impossible to contemplate the British Constitution, and not to loathe the defects of our own. If we have the spirit of liberty, you ought to blame yourselves and the contagion of those great qualities which have distinguished Great Britain. I make no doubt if your country had not been the admiration of Europe, we had never perplexed His Majesty's Council with a single virtue, and therefore Great Britain must excuse our sentiments as only giving her back the image of herself. My Lord, I shall conclude my letter, which I fear has tired your Lordship, with this observation, that if it had come to a question between the liberty and the King of England, those who admitted her supremacy would have fought for the latter, and those who denied it would have died for the former.

I have the honour to be, with great respect, &c. &c.

H. Grattan.

RETIREMENT OF SIR HENRY CLINTON FROM THE AMERICAN COMMAND.

[Extract from Sir Henry Clinton's MS. Memoirs.]

May, 1782.

When my friends in England saw what effects Lord Cornwallis's letter was likely to have on the minds of the public, and how all concerned were striving to avail themselves of it in my absence to avoid the odium of the late misfortune in the Chesapeak, and fix it on me, they very earnestly petitioned His Majesty (unknown, however, to myself, and at that time contrary to my wishes) to permit me to return home. Sir Guy Carleton being in consequence sent out to New York to relieve

1782. me, I had the happiness of resigning to him, on the 8th of May, the chief command of His Majesty's forces in North America; a command which I had neither solicited nor coveted, but accepted merely as an act of duty with reluctance, and which I was afterwards compelled to retain for four years, although I had each year prayed to be released from it, from a thorough conviction of the impossibility of my doing anything very essential towards extinguishing the rebellion without more troops than I had the direction of, and a co-operating naval force constantly superior to that of the enemy; for immediately after I received the command from Sir William Howe, nearly half of my best troops were detached, by order, to the West Indies, and on other distant services, from whence they never returned to me afterwards. Reinforcements of troops and ships had been indeed most amply promised me, but neither came to answer any essential purpose, and my posts were, notwithstanding, insulted or menaced almost each year of my command, by powerful French fleets, three of which were greatly superior to the King's co-operating with me; and the few scanty supplies of troops with which my army was sometimes fed, always arrived so late in the season, that they were in general of very little service; and the first importation brought with them a gaol distemper, which soon sent half of my army into the hospitals. To this may be added, that in consequence of the distance we were from our sources of supply, and perhaps some little inattention to our wants, I was more than once, during my command, reduced to the verge of starving; so that when I look back at the constantly diminishing strength of my own army (which weakened, of course, in proportion to our conquests, and was never properly adequate, even to the defence of the extensive and numerous posts it occupied) and the daily increasing numbers, confidence, and discipline of that belonging to the enemy, together with the great aids they were frequently receiving, both in ships and troops, from France and Spain, I only wonder that we did not meet with a serious affront sooner. I am, however, happy in the reflection that I did my duty in concealing nothing from Ad-

ministration; having repeatedly warned them of our critical situation, and given it unequivocally as my opinion, that unless they could furnish an army capable of crushing the rebellion at once, they had nothing but a ruinous protracted war to expect, and that it might be wiser in that case to withdraw the troops altogether, and leave the further prosecution of it to the navy. 1782.

It would certainly have been a most fortunate circumstance for me, and I might have perhaps managed better, had I never been promised these reinforcements, but been told at once that none could be sent to me. For, being ever zealous to put the troops in motion the instant I could muster a force sufficient to act with, I was constantly making preparations and forming plans of operation, the execution of which depended on their arrival. But when disappointment obliged me, as was almost constantly the case, to lay my projects aside, or adopt others more suited to my abilities, or even to become inactive, I was immediately accused of indecision, not unfrequently, perhaps, by the officers under me, who were ignorant of the true cause.

DIVISIONS IN LORD ROCKINGHAM'S CABINET.

[From the Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs.]

June, 1782.

I FIND from a kind of short diary, taken down at the time, that Mr. Fox's advice previously to Lord Rockingham's death, prevailed less often than would be expected from talents so superior. Mr. Oswald had been the person first pitched on to see and communicate with Dr. Franklin on the subject of pacification. On this gentleman's return, it was Mr. Fox's wish to have placed the whole negotiation with any of the Powers at war into the hands of Mr. Grenville; but the Cabinet decided that as the Doctor desired the return of Mr. Oswald, to whom he had spoken with openness and freedom, it would

1782. be impolitic not to comply with a request of this nature. Besides, it was not yet fully known in what light our offers to treat might be received by the French Ministry. The line of our proposals was:—Independence for America, and the restitution of matters to the state in which they stood on the Treaty of Paris, and these were to be considered as the basis of the negotiation. Mr. Thomas Grenville was soon after sent over to Paris, to treat according to Mr. Fox's plan, with all or any of the belligerent Powers.

On Friday, the 28th (of June), Mr. Fox called on me in the evening; when naturally, and with much frankness, he entered upon his awkward situation at Council, complaining of the decided opinions against everything proposed by him; and added, that it would be impossible to go on in such a way, and that he could not proceed to write to Mr. Grenville till he had laid the matter before another Cabinet. . . . . He said that he saw too plainly that the present (Ministry) could not last, and grounded his argument on his considering Lord Shelburne to be as fully devoted to the views of the Court as ever Lord North had been.

. . . . . .

At a Cabinet held on the 30th (of June), the day previous to that on which Lord Rockingham died, Mr. Fox pressed us earnestly to give separately our opinion on the same point he had urged on Wednesday, relatively to the Independence of America being freely granted, even without a treaty for a peace. The majority was for a treaty accompanying the surrender of the claim; but that it was also advisable that Independence should in the first instance be allowed, as the basis to treat on. This decision not coming up to Mr. Fox's ideas, he declared with much regret, that his part was taken to quit his office, which the illness alone of Lord Rockingham occasioned him for the present to hold. Such was the state of the Cabinet when the country had to deplore the loss of this most amiable man and upright Minister.

. . . . . .

1782.

July 12.

I had soon after a very friendly communication of all that had passed among Lord Rockingham's principal friends, from Lord Keppel, who kept nothing back from me as far as he was informed; by the whole of which it appeared to me, that Mr. Fox was decided to give no facility to the new arrangement, though he was once brought by the Duke of Richmond and Lord Keppel to say to them, that if Lord John Cavendish would take the Seals, he would remain his colleague. Lord John was for a moment in doubt, but on the first of his hesitating, Fox waited not an instant, but decided his own resignation. Lord Keppel acknowledged that the share of power offered by Lord Shelburne, was all that Mr. Fox could desire to assist his management of the House of Commons, and was equal to anything that could in justice be required, or with propriety granted. The distress of Lord Keppel's mind was great, but the sense of what was due to the country, to the fleet in general, and to the officers he had himself sent on different commands, prevailed over all other considerations.

. . . . . .

July 13.

I had a long conversation with Mr. Fox, whose natural character was to be open, and particularly so to me. He laid great stress on what he felt on finding that he had been so principal an instrument to make that very man (Lord Shelburne) Minister, whom he most disliked. He also plainly told me that he never should have sided with the Duke of Richmond to prevail on Lord Rockingham to come in, if he had not thought that the Cabinet formation, as delivered in, would not have been accepted by the King.

1782.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

Shelburne House, August 10. 1782.

My dear Duke,

It was my intention to write to your Grace a long letter, but I have been prevented; I will, however, do it, and shall have great pleasure in delivering my mind to your Grace, in whose friendship and principles I have a most perfect confidence; but it is impossible to describe to you how provokingly my time is taken up with the nonsense of Mr. Burke's Bill. It was both framed and carried through without the least regard to *facts;* and penned so that every line required the opinion of the Attorney-General. The only extravagance I have, or shall be, guilty of, is in favour of Lord Jersey. In the mean time, I want to know your Grace's opinion about Suffolk. It is of the utmost consequence to our negotiation, to show that there is some spirit remaining with the public, and if our negotiation fails, our existence must depend upon its coming forth. I am not without hopes that the example might catch; and, if it goes on, could wish it upon the broadest ground possible.

I am going to Wycombe for a day, and will not therefore, as I am very late, trouble your Grace with more than to assure you that

I am, &c.,

Shelburne.

NOTE BY THE DUKE OF GRAFTON.

The Suffolk measure alluded to in this letter related to the landowners of that county subscribing to the building of a line-of-battle ship, a measure proposed by other counties also, and would have taken place had the war unfortunately continued.

1782.

EARL OF SHELBURNE TO SECRETARY TOWNSHEND.

[State Paper Office.]

Streatham, October 26. (1782).

Dear Mr. Townshend,

May I take the liberty of requesting you to forward the inclosed to Mr. Oswald, with the King's commands to interest himself in behalf of the Penn family, and to communicate it to the Commissioners, if he thinks it will serve their cause.

I have no copy of it, nor do I believe that they have; so that you will be so good as to desire Mr. Oswald to return the original or a copy.

The King gave me, from the beginning of the negotiation, his most distinct orders to take every step possible in favour of the Penn family. Ever yours,

Shelburne.

MR. FITZHERBERT TO LORD GRANTHAM.

[Extract.]

Paris, October 28. 1782.

Having dwelt much, as usual, upon the subject of Gibraltar, he (the Comte d'Aranda) said that in case our Court would consent to treat for the exchange of that fortress, there was no possession belonging to the Spanish monarchy, without literally *dismembering* it, that the King, his master, would not willingly cede to us; and having repeated this, after his manner, again and again, without explaining what he meant by the *limbs of Spain*, he at length went so far of himself as to particularise, first the island of Cuba, and afterwards that of Porto Rico as coming under that description, adding (at least, so I understood him,) that these were the only possessions, exclusively of the South American Continent, that he excepted out of the foregoing general offer.

1782.

MR. STRACHEY TO THE AMERICAN COMMISSIONERS.

[State Paper Office.]

Paris, November 5. 1782.

GENTLEMEN,

KNOWING the expectation of the King's Ministers that a full indemnity shall be provided for the whole body of refugees, either by a restitution of their property, or by some stipulated compensation for their losses, and being confident, as I have repeatedly assured you, that your refusal on this point will be the great obstacle to a conclusion and ratification of that peace which is meant as a solid, perfect, permanent reconciliation and reunion between Great Britain and America, I am unwilling to leave Paris without once more submitting the matter to your consideration. It affects equally, in my opinion, the honour and the humanity of your country and of ours. How far you will be justified in risking every favourite object of America by contending against these principles, is for you to determine. Independence and a more than reasonable possession of territory seem to be within your reach. Will you suffer them to be outweighed by the gratification of resentment against individuals? I venture to assert that such a conduct has no parallel in the history of civilised nations.

I am under the necessity of setting out by two o'clock today. If the time is too short for your re-consideration and final determination of this important point, I shall hope that you will enable Mr. Oswald to despatch a messenger after me, who may be with me before morning at Chantilly, where I propose sleeping to-night, or who may overtake me before I arrive in London, with a satisfactory answer to this letter.

I have the honour, &c.

H. STRACHEY.

MR. STRACHEY TO SECRETARY TOWNSHEND.

Paris, Nov. 29. 1782.

Eleven at Night.

A VERY few hours ago, we thought it impossible that any Treaty could be made. We have at last, however, brought matters so near to a conclusion, that we have agreed upon Articles, and are to meet to-morrow for the purpose of signing. Enclosed are such of the Articles as are altered, and an additional one which we mean as a security in case it be true that Bermuda is taken.

MR. STRACHEY TO SECRETARY TOWNSHEND.

Paris, Nov. 29. 1782.

DEAR SIR,

YOUR private letter by Lauzun deserves my warmest acknowledgments, and I am now only anxious to find, at my return, that you continue satisfied with my best endeavours. We consider the Article of the Refugees, as now settled, much more advantageous than any of the modifications you sent. The Article of Exceptions would surely have been humiliating. The American Commissioners continued to assert that they had not the power of stipulation in that point, but that the recommendation of the Congress would have all the effect we proposed. We had determined this morning to send home before we would admit the Article of the Fishery; but when some alterations were made, and we saw everything would otherwise be afloat, we agreed.

I need not tell you that Mr. Fitzherbert's abilities and conduct have been of infinite use. Indeed, you would have had no Treaty without him. I must defer entering into a detail of

1782. the whole business, till I have the pleasure of seeing you, which I think will be before Thursday.

I am, with the truest esteem, &c., &c., &c.,

H. Strachey.

MR. STRACHEY TO MR. NEPEAN.

[Extract.]

Paris, Nov. 29. 1782.

Dear Nepean,

. . . . . .

Now, are we to be hanged or applauded for thus rescuing you from the American war? I hope to arrive by the meeting of Parliament, though that is not material, as you will have the Treaty itself,—I hope, to-morrow.

I am half dead with perpetual anxiety, and shall not be at ease till I see how the great men receive me. If this is not as good a peace as was expected, I am confident it is the best that could have been made.

Adieu, for a few days.

H. Strachey.

DIVISIONS IN LORD SHELBURNE'S CABINET.

[From the Duke of Grafton's MS. Memoirs.]

Nov. and Dec. 1782.

On my arrival in town, November 24th, I found that the Parliament was prorogued on account of the negotiations.

I resume again my Journal, in which there had been a chasm from September to that time, but I have so strong a recollection of the events, that I equally depend on my memory. On the day after my arrival in town, I received, by my good old servant, Schaller, a verbal message from Lord Shelburne that

he came to town almost on purpose to see me, and that he should be with me at four o'clock next day. I had not yet seen any of the Ministers when his Lordship called upon me according to his message. The measure of proroguing the meeting of Parliament, he told me, stood on the ground of a firm persuasion that the Court of France was in earnest, and intended to bring forward, through M. de Rayneval, who had returned to Paris, such answers, before the 5th of December, as might be considered an ultimatum, on which peace or a continuation of the war was to be decided. 1782.

Lord Shelburne then expatiated on the little hope that could be entertained from a continuance of the war; in which opinion I perfectly agreed with him, though I differed widely on the little consequence he gave to the cession of Gibraltar. On finding this difference in our sentiments, I said that I was sorry to hear this from him; on which Lord Shelburne observed, that I never had wished that the cession of that place should stand in the way of a peace, provided an equivalent was found, such as Porto Rico. I replied: "Understand me right. "I shall always part with Gibraltar with the greatest reluc- "tance, though I am still free to acknowledge that I think that "a proper peace ought not to hang on this one point, in case a "fair equivalent offered." But I said that I did not know sufficiently the value and circumstances of the island to say that I considered Porto Rico to be such an equivalent as would satisfy me. To this his Lordship replied that I might be assured that on the fullest inquiry I should find, as he had, that the value would exceed my expectations.

. . . . . .

On the morning of the 2nd of December, M. de Rayneval returned, and with him M. de Vergennes' son. . . . . Next day, Lord Shelburne sent to me to call upon him before the meeting of the Cabinet. He acquainted me, in much hurry, with the heads of the Spanish answer and exchanges offered. He showed me also the draft for the King's Speech; then, excusing himself for leaving me so abruptly to go to the Duke of Richmond, I went down to the Cabinet, which sat discussing the several points from eleven till half-past seven. A minute was drawn,

1782. at last, of advice upon the Spanish Article, but with an intention that it should again come before us.

Lord Shelburne, as I observed, was particularly vexed at what I had held out on the Spanish business, and on the various equivalents proposed for the cession of Gibraltar. A message from him the next morning did not surprise me; and as he desired to see me as soon as possible, I went to him as soon as I had breakfasted, with a firm resolution to maintain my ground. He, in the first place, inquired of me where I had taken up the notion that a barren, uninhabited island was equal to or more valuable than West Florida, and afterwards, whether I still continued in the same opinion. My answer was, that I was clear, from the best information on the subject, that the greatest advantages, both for trade and power, might be derived from Trinidad; and that I professed an indignation that Spain should succeed in having her great object, Gibraltar, conceded to her, without giving up Trinidad, to be in addition to any cession she had proposed to us. I added further, and very deliberately, that, friend to peace as I anxiously was, sooner than I would sign the treaty on such terms as seemed now to be intended, I could answer it to my conscience and to my country to advise the continuance of the war until better terms could be obtained. After much difference of opinion on what related to the negotiation, and many warm observations on the factions by which the country was distracted, he said to me:—"Duke of "Grafton, I will fairly tell you that as to Lord Keppel, I should "be happy to see him away from his Board. The Duke of "Richmond, also, must take the part he judges proper: I shall "see it with indifference. But, though it would be very un- "pleasant to me, and give me great concern to differ from you, yet I must bear it, for I am resolved to stand by the King."

EXTRACTS OF LETTERS FROM KING GEORGE THE THIRD TO LORD NORTH*,

1780—1782;

AND TO BISHOP HURD OF WORCESTER,

1782—1783.

February 22. 1780.

Lord North cannot be surprised at my having read with some astonishment that the majority was so small this morning, on a question which was to circumscribe the power of the Crown to bestow its benevolence to persons in narrow circumstances.† Had the Speaker been able to continue last Tuesday, there was every reason to expect a very great majority. I must remind Lord North of a similar event which occurred when Mr. Grenville was at the head of the Treasury — the question on General Warrants. When he wrote me word of the division, marks of being dispirited were obvious. I instantly answered that if he would but hide his feelings and speak with firmness, the first occasion that offered he would find his numbers return. He followed my advice, and the event exceeded my most sanguine expectations.

March 7. 1780.

I can never suppose this country so lost to all ideas of self-importance as to be willing to grant American Independence.

* See the preliminary notice to the former series of these letters in the Appendix, Vol. V.

† Sir George Savile's motion for an account of the pensions granted, on which Lord North's amendment was carried by only two votes, — 128 against 180.

1780. If that word be ever universally adopted, I shall despair of this country being preserved from a state of inferiority. I hope never to see that day, for, however I am treated, I must love this country.

May 19. 1780.

You cannot be surprised at my real sorrow in seeing you persist in the idea that your health will not permit you to remain in your present situation. Had I the power of oratory or the pen of an Addison, I could say no more than what I can convey in the few following lines—namely, that I am conscious if you will resolve with spirit to continue in your present employment, that, with the assistance of a new Parliament, I shall be able to keep the present Constitution in its pristine lustre; that there is no means of letting you retire from taking the lead that will not probably end in evil; and that therefore, till I see things change to a more favourable situation, I shall not think myself at liberty to grant your request. You must be the judge whether you can honourably desert me when infallible ruin must ensue.

July 3. 1780.

The propositions of Opposition are understood to be as follows:—

I. The American War requires no discussion, as they did not see how the troops could now be called from thence, and the dependence of America need not at present be taken into consideration.

II. That some public measures must be admitted to make them to coalesce with reputation, such as Mr. Crewe's Bill, the Contractors' Bill, and part if not the whole of Mr. Burke's Bill.

III. Lord Rockingham did not want office,—to offer the Duke of Richmond—and Mr. Fox to be considered on this occasion.

IV. The Dukes of Portland and Manchester — Mess^rs. Townshend and Burke. 1780.

V. No objection to any one remaining in office but Lord Sandwich.

The evasive answer about America will by no means answer. Indeed, on all constitutional points the Opposition have run so wild that it is absolutely necessary for those who come into office to give assurances that they do not mean to be hampered by the tenets they have held during their opposition. The second proposition is therefore quite inadmissible. The Duke of Richmond and Mr. Fox have more avowedly than any others of the Rockingham party dipped themselves; for they have added shortening the duration of Parliaments, and the former, by a strange conceit of changing the whole mode and right of election, would materially alter the Constitution. This (being) added to his unremitted personal ill-conduct to me, it cannot be expected that I should express any wish of seeing him in my service.

Persons must atone for their faults before I can attempt to forgive them. The Duke of Richmond has not put his foot into my apartments for seven years; but not content with this, sent me a message by Lord Weymouth, that though he never came near me, he, as a Lieutenant-General, asked my leave to go to France. As to Mr. Fox, if any lucrative, not Ministerial, office can be pointed out for him, provided he will support the measures of Government, I shall have no objection to the proposition. He never had any principle, and can therefore act as his interest may guide him.

The Duke of Portland I should with pleasure see in my service. Ireland, or any great Court office, would, I hope, suit him. The Duke of Manchester in a lucrative office I should not object to. Mess^rs. Townshend and Burke would be real acquisitions.

1780.

September 26. 1780.

Sir H. Clinton's despatch* is certainly of a very gloomy cast. But the giving up the game would be total ruin. A small state may certainly subsist, but a great one mouldering cannot get into an inferior situation, but must be annihilated. We must strengthen the West Indian squadron, recruit Clinton's army, not for conquest, but to keep what he has. The French never could stand the cold of Germany; that of America must be more fatal to them. America is distressed to the greatest degree. The finances of France as well as Spain are in no good situation. This war, like the last, will prove one of credit. By giving up the game, we destroy ourselves to avoid destruction. We must put everything on the continent of America into the best state of defence, contract the war to that sole end, and on float do as much mischief to our enemies as we can.

(*On the Secret Letter from M. Necker to Lord North.*)

December 18. 1780.

It shows France is under greater difficulties than we imagined, or she would not by such various channels seem to court peace. With France it is easily settled if she would desist from encouraging rebellion, or not add to her other insults by attempting to effect independency; which, whether under its apparent name or a truce, is the same in reality.

February 9, 1781.

You may settle with Mr. Wraxall, Member for Hindon, in any just demands he may have. Undoubtedly he was sent over by the discontented nobility of Denmark, previous to the death of the late Queen my sister, with a plan for getting her back to

* Of the preceding 25th of August; dated New York and printed in the former part of this Appendix (p. iv.).

Copenhagen, which was introduced to me with a letter from her. Her death and my delicate situation, having consented to her retiring into my German dominions, prevented me from entering eagerly into this proposal. 1780.

(*On a peerage to Lord George Germaine.*)

December 26. 1781.

No one can then say, he is disgraced; and when the appointment of Sir Guy Carleton* accompanies his retreat, it will be ascribed to its true cause, and not to any change in my sentiments on the essential point; namely, the getting a peace at the expense of a separation from America, which no difficulties can get me to consent to.

March 17. 1782.

Sorry to find that the majority this morning did not exceed nine. It looks as if the House of Commons were going lengths that could not have been expected. I am resolved not to throw myself into the hands of Opposition at all events, and shall certainly, if things go as they seem to tend, know what my conscience as well as honour dictates as the only way left for me.

March 27. 1782.

At length the fatal day is come which the misfortunes of the

* In the spring of 1782, as already stated, Sir Henry Clinton was succeeded by Sir Guy Carleton as Commander-in-Chief of the force in North America. Lord George Germaine and Sir Guy Carleton had long been personal enemies. See, in the Appendix to my Sixth Volume, the King's letter of March 3. 1778.

1782. times, and the sudden change of sentiments of the House of Commons have driven me to, of changing my Ministers, and a more general removal of other persons than, I believe, ever was known before. I have to the last fought for individuals, but the number I have saved, except my Bedchamber, is incredibly few. You would hardly believe that even the Duke of Montagu was strongly run at, but I declared that I would sooner let confusion follow than part with the late Governor of my sons, and so unexceptionable a man; so that he and Lord Ashburnham remain. The effusion of my sorrows has made me say more than I intended; but I ever did, and ever shall, look on you as a friend, as well as a faithful servant.

THE KING TO BISHOP HURD OF WORCESTER, CLERK OF THE CLOSET.*

Windsor, July 23. 1782.

My good Lord,

It is with infinite satisfaction I received on Sunday, your letter; by which I find that at last the German books, wrote in Latin, and collected by Professor Heyne, by my directions, for you, have arrived at Hartlebury. I own the reputation of the University of Gottingen I have much at heart, from an idea that if ever mankind reflect, they must allow that those who encourage religion, virtue, and literature, deserve as much solid praise as those who disturb the world, and commit all the horrors of war, to gain the reputation of being heroes.

Indeed, my good Lord, we live in unprincipled days; and no change can be expected but by an early attention to the education of the rising generation. Where my opinion must be of weight—I mean in my Electoral dominions—it shall be the

* The originals of these and some other letters from the King to Bishop Hurd were sold by public auction in the year 1849, at the rooms of Messrs. Puttick, in Piccadilly. Several of the number were purchased by Sir Robert Peel.

chief object of my care; and should it be crowned with success, it may incline others to follow the example. 1782.

. . . . . .

Your very affectionate friend,

GEORGE R.

THE KING TO BISHOP HURD.

Windsor, August 20. 1782.

MY GOOD LORD.

THERE is no probability, and, indeed, scarce a possibility, that my youngest child* can survive this day. The knowing you are acquainted with the tender feelings of the Queen's heart, convinces me you will be uneasy till apprised that she is calling the only solid assistant under affliction — religion — to her assistance.

She feels the peculiar goodness of Divine Providence, in never having before put her to so severe a trial, though she has so numerous a family. I do not deny (that) I also write to you, my good Lord, as a balm to my mind. As I have not you present to converse with, I think it the most pleasing occupation by this means to convey to you, that I place my confidence that the Almighty will never fill my cup of sorrow fuller than I can bear; and when I reflect on the dear cause of our tribulation, I consider his change to be so greatly for his advantage, that I sometimes think it unkind to wish his recovery had been effected. And when I take this event in another point of view, and reflect how much more miserable it would have been to have seen him lead a life of pain, and perhaps end thus at a more mature age, I also confess that the goodness of the Almighty appears strongly in what certainly gives me great concern, but might have been still more severe.

G. R.

* Prince Alfred.

1783.

THE KING TO BISHOP HURD.

Windsor, May 6. 1783.

My good Lord,

The humanity which is not among the least conspicuous of your excellent qualities, would, I am persuaded, make you feel for the present distress in which the Queen and I are involved, had you not the farther incitement of a sincere attachment to us both.

The little object we are deploring * was known to you, and consequently his merits: therefore you will not be surprised that the blow is strong. We both call on the sole assistant to those in distress — the dictates of religion. I have proposed to the Queen, and she approves of it, that I should desire you to come on Saturday, and bring Mr. Fisher with you, that, on Sunday, in my chapel in the Castle, we may have the comfort of hearing you preach, and receiving from your hands the Holy Communion. I think this a very proper time for renewing the baptismal vow; and, though greatly grieved, I feel true submission to the decrees of Providence, and great thankfulness for having enjoyed for four years that dear infant.

George R.

* Prince Octavius, born 1779, died May 3. 1783.

POSTSCRIPT ON THE AMERICAN WAR.

Since the preceding sheets were in type, I have received, through the kindness of my friend, Colonel William Mure, M.P., a copy of the work privately printed by him, and presented to the Maitland Club. ("Selections from the Family Papers preserved at Caldwell," 3 vols. 4to., 1854.) From these, by his permission, I here append two extracts, illustrative of the American War. The first, a secret letter from one of the French Generals to one of the French Ministers, appears to have been intercepted by the British troops, and obtained by Captain Mure, of Caldwell, when serving on the staff of Cornwallis's army. In its general tone it may be considered a little too disparaging; yet it is strong evidence of the aversion with which the American people still continued to regard their old enemies the French, and it is also of value, as it serves to prove how unfavourably, even after the events of Saratoga, the French officers were disposed to judge of the American cause.

The second letter is from Captain Mure himself, when taken with the troops of Cornwallis at York-town; it vividly depicts the spirit of that gallant and deserving, though unfortunate, garrison.

M.

June, 1854.

GENERAL DU PORTAIL AU COMTE DE ST. GERMAIN, MINISTRE D'ETAT.

Du camp de White-marsh,
(vers la fin de 1777.)

(Extrait)

C'était une faute capitale au Gouvernement Britannique, de vouloir que le Général Bourgoyne traversât plus de 200 lieues dans un pays affreux et presque désert, pour venir joindre les

1777. Généraux Howe et Clinton. . . . . L'évènement a été encore plus heureux que je ne pensais. Mais si les Anglais, au lieu de tant de diversions, qui ont été faites aux dépens de l'objet principal, eussent opéré contre le Général Washington avec 18 ou 20 mille hommes, je ne sais pas trop ce que nous serions devenus ; car, quant à nous, en doublant notre armée nous ne doublons pas sa force, mais triplons notre embarras.

Voilà pour le plan de campagne. Si nous examinons ensuite la conduite du Général Howe, nous voyons qu'il n'a pas même fait tout ce qu'il pouvait faire. Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le mander après la bataille de Brandywine, s'il eût profité de ses avantages il ne serait plus question de l'armée du Général Washington. Et depuis il a mis dans toutes ses opérations une lenteur, une timidité, qui a toujours fait l'objet de mon étonnement. Mais il peut se raviser ; on peut envoyer de Londres un autre Général, et alors nous ne nous en tirerons pas, peut-être, si bien. Au reste, les évènements qui dépendent de l'habileté des Généraux ne peuvent se prévoir ; ils ne doivent point entrer dans les spéculations que l'on fait pour l'avenir. N'ayons donc égard qu'au nombre de troupes ; et je crois pouvoir avancer que si les Anglais peuvent avoir ici 30 mille hommes, ils doivent réduire le pays. Une seconde cause qui peut hâter cette réduction et même l'opérer presque seule, c'est le manque de munitions de guerre, et de choses nécessaires à la vie. En munitions de guerre il lui faut à peu près tout : en autres objets il lui faut des toiles, des draps, du cordage, du sel, de l'eau-de-vie, du sucre, &c., &c., &c. Ces derniers articles sont plus importans qu'on ne le croirait d'abord.

Avant la guerre, les Américains, quoique ne connaissant pas le luxe, avaient abondamment tout ce qui est nécessaire à une vie commode et agréable. Etre la plus part du tems oisif, passer la plus grande partie de la journée à fumer et à boire du thé ou des liqueurs fortes, voilà le grand goût de ces gens-ci. C'est donc bien malgré lui que le peuple se trouve transformé tout à coup en un peuple guerrier et réduit à mener une vie dure et frugale : aussi n'aime-t-il point du tout la guerre ; . . Il est sans passion pour une cause qu'il ne soutient que par-

cequ'il suit le mouvement qu'on lui a communiqué. Il y a cent fois plus d'enthousiasme pour cette révolution-ci dans tel café de Paris que ce soit que dans toutes les Colonies Unies. 1777.

Il faut donc que la France, si elle veut achever cette révolution, fournisse à ce peuple tout ce qui est nécessaire, pour qu'il ne trouve pas la guerre trop dure. Il lui en coûtera sans doute quelques millions; mais elle en sera bien dédommagée par l'anéantissement de la puissance de l'Angleterre, qui, dépouillée de ses colonies, bientôt sans marine, sans commerce, ne jouera plus qu'un bien petit rôle, et laissera la France sans rivale.

Le peuple ici, quoiqu'en guerre avec les Anglais, hait bien plus les Français. Nous l'éprouvons chaque jour; et malgré tout ce que la France a fait et pourrait faire pour lui, il préférerait de se réconcilier avec les Anglais, à recevoir en force les hommes du monde qu'il craint le plus.

CAPTAIN MURE OF CALDWELL TO ANDREW STUART, ESQ., M.P.

York-town,
October 21. 1781.

My dear Sir,

I cannot sufficiently lament the unfortunate occasion on which I have commenced my correspondence with you from America. With the receipt of this, you will hear of the great public loss which has befallen us, by the capitulation of this army in York-town, which took place yesterday, and by which I am once more a prisoner. I refer you to Lord Cornwallis's letter in the *Gazette* for the particulars of this melancholy business. Every man in the garrison is conscious that all has been done that could be done, and the greatest part of them would with pleasure have sacrificed their lives, could it any further have promoted the general good.

We have been blocked up since the 28th of August, by a

1781. fleet of thirty-five sail of the line, and have been besieged by an army of at least 20,000 men, with an artillery sufficient to attack the strongest fortified place in Europe. After expending all our ammunition—though almost unable to show a gun, against the superiority of the enemy's artillery—with only a week's provision, with no prospect of relief, and after having obliged the enemy to finish their second parallel within 150 yards of our lines, Lord Cornwallis, to save the lives of many brave soldiers, entered into terms.

The capitulation was signed on the 19th, surrendering prisoners of war about 3200, fit for duty, besides 200 sick or wounded. We had between 500 and 600 killed and wounded during the siege. I am sorry to be obliged to tell you, that your poor nephew, Major Cochrane *, suffered amongst the former. He had his head carried off by a cannon shot, when standing close to my Lord Cornwallis.

He came here two days before, in a most spirited manner, with despatches from the Commander-in-Chief, in a small boat, and got through the French fleet; he is much lamented as a most gallant officer. I pity poor Mrs. Cochrane, who, I hear, is at New York.

. . . . . .

The French officers are polite to an extreme.

Believe me,

Your affectionate, &c. &c.

WILLIAM MURE.

* Son of the fifth Earl of Dundonald, by his Countess, sister of Mr. Stuart.

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